Famous Artists Course

Famous Artists Schools, Inc., Westport, Connecticut

Constructing the head and hands

Lesson 6

Albert Dorne

Fred Ludekens

Norman Rockwell

Al Parker

Ben Stahl

Stevan Dohanos

Jon Whitcomb

Robert Fawcett

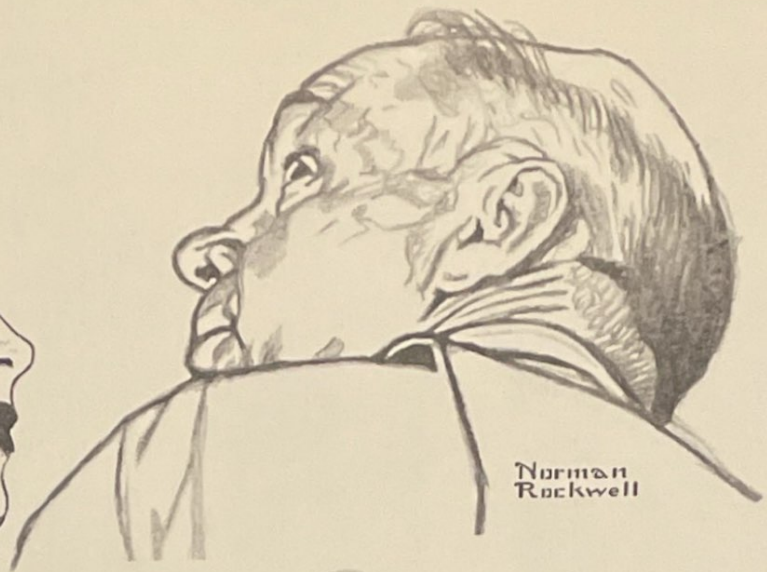
Peter Helck

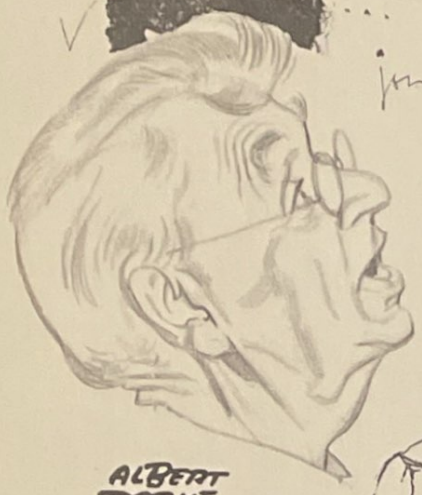
George Giusti

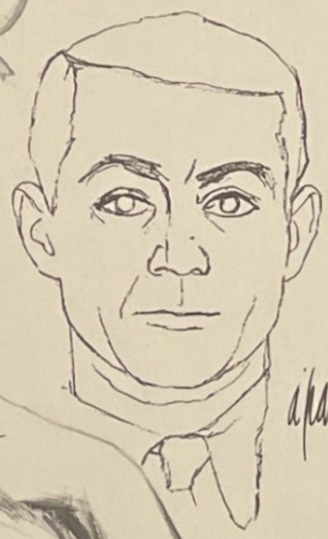
Austin Briggs

Harold Von Schmidt

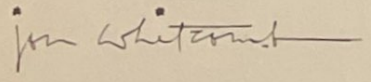
COPYRIGHT © 1960, FAMOUS ARTISTS SCHOOLS, Inc.
Printed in U.S.A.







Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art



Drawing the head

Think of anyone you know – and you instinctively think of his or her face. The simple fact is, the face identifies and sets apart every individual on earth. Our own face is just as much a part of our personality as our emotions, our thoughts, our likes and our dislikes. These show plainly to others, whether we think so or not. We think of and constantly judge people we do or don't know by what we see in their faces and we cannot deny that we are moved by the feelings of love, hatred, amusement, disgust, and pity we observe in them. In fact, all the emotions can be observed in the face.

In most pictures the head is the focal point of interest. Its attitude and expression quickly communicate the idea of the picture. It expresses the human relationships between people – bridging the gap between the subject who has been painted and the person who views the picture. The artist who understands this and uses it to fullest advantage will, indeed, be successful.

You have been looking at faces and reacting to them all your life. From now on, however, you must see them with the careful, observant eye of the artist. As you study faces, you will see that they fall into certain basic groups – the broad, the lean, the round, the flat, the strong, the weak, the homely, the beautiful. They may be young or old. The heads on the opposite page are a reminder of the wide variety of human types and expressions which your Faculty members have used to create an emotional response in millions of people. These drawings are successful only because each of the artists first learned how to draw a solid, well-proportioned head in any position. This is what you are about to do here – learn to draw the head so that it has the solidity and conviction of form symbolized by the classical sculptured head on the facing page.

The head is more than a solid form – it is a form that expresses attitude and emotion. Our feelings are communicated by the features, and every artist should be aware of what each one can contribute to an expressive drawing of the head.

The eyes – the most expressive of the features

The eyes are the most expressive features of the face. When the eyes are closed or hidden, the most vital impact of the face is lost and most means of expression are gone. Generally, beautiful eyes are not set close together, nor are they small or too deep-set. The eyes can sometimes tell, more vividly than words, our emotions and moods, and usually we cannot conceal these emotions even when we want to. The eyes can, more than any other feature of the face, betray all the emotions, from hatred, contempt, indignation – to love, tragedy and joy. In fact, almost every human emotion can be transmitted by the eyes.

Directly above the eyes, the eyebrows follow the upper ridge lines of the eye sockets. The eyebrows are only two rows of small hairs, but they have great importance in showing emotion. They are the exclamation marks of feeling, emphasizing the mood shown by the eyes and the rest of the features. Shock, suffering, terror, or amusement – deep emotions or fleeting sentiments – are instantly registered by the eyebrows. But even when they are motionless they make a definite contribution to the effect of the face. Beautiful eyebrows help create beautiful faces. Shaggy eyebrows have always been looked upon as a sign of force and virility in young men and authority in old age.

The mouth shows emotion and character

Next to the eyes, the mouth is the most expressive feature of the face. When the mouth is in repose, you can see its full, normal shape. This shape changes greatly under the influence of the emotions. The movements of the mouth can show every feeling. The lips, turned slightly upwards at the corners, may indicate good humor – when they are turned down, we read unhappiness or melancholy in them. They can show determination or frustration, or they can signify, without words, distaste or the desire to be kissed. The mouth laughs – it cries – it shouts – it whispers – it sings. Its beauty lies not only in its shape but in its color as well. In women, the soft, appealing red lips help to create sex appeal in pictures – as they do in real life. Both narrow and broad mouths can be beautiful, depending on their proportion to the rest of the face. The shape of the mouth may also show character in both men and women. The broad mouth usually suggests generosity and friendliness – the thin mouth, sternness or pettiness of nature. These assumptions are not always true, but they hold good in pictures.

You cannot consider the mouth apart from the chin. The chin can also have a decided effect upon the character of the face. A square, prominent chin gives a look of aggressiveness and determination. A receding chin suggests a lack of strength. In women, the rounded chin is usually most desirable. In general, a prominent line of the jaw suits a man more than a woman.

The other features play their part

In a picture of a beautiful woman, an elegantly shaped nose is almost an essential requirement. While you have some choice as to the type of nose, it must still be well shaped to conform with a beautiful and delicate face. In drawing a handsome man, many liberties can be taken with the size and prominence of the nose. The nose can be used very successfully to help develop and portray characters of many different kinds. However, you should always take care that, no matter what the general character of the subject, the nose is always correctly related to the other features of the face.

Just as the nose lies between and in front of the cheeks, the ears lie directly behind them, on the sides of the head. You will observe that the shape of the ear varies mostly at the top and the bottom. At the top it may look like a high or shallow arch, and the turning of the rim may be broad or narrow. The bottom of the ear forms a lobe or it may simply join the neck without one. Because of its whorls and convolutions, the ear has often been compared to a seashell. Drawing the ears properly is quite tricky and takes a good deal of study and practice.

The centuries have taught woman to make the most of her hair and to use it as a means of decoration to frame the face. As fashions have changed with the passing of time and dictated changes in hair style and color, she has made the most of it — as have the successful artists who have painted her. The custom, for the man, has generally been to cut the hair short at frequent intervals, so that it served as a covering over the top of the head and the back of the skull. However, even in these short croppings, men also adhered to the style dictated by the period. Poets, throughout history, have written about and sung of the beauty and color of women's hair. Indeed, some of the most beautiful lines ever written have been of the hair.

Finally we come to the neck. The neck is the key to the action of the head, since it enables the head to look up or down or turn to the side. Don't draw all necks alike — they vary in shape from person to person. A neck may be long or short, thin or fat. In the female, owing to the lack of any great muscular development, it is usually round and smooth, at least in the young. In the male, and especially in athletic and old men, it will show well-defined and prominent muscles. These are more pronounced when the neck is in action.

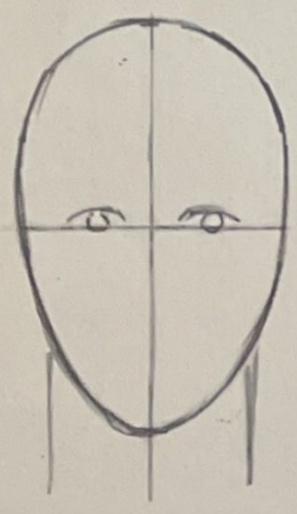
A head is not just a shape; it is a vital, expressive thing with motives and character which you must like or dislike, agree with or disagree with. There is no such thing as an inanimate head (except a dead one — and even then it must look dead). A head laughs, weeps, bellows — shows surprise and anger. It must be either fat, thin, long, square, round, mean, kind or ornery. It must represent some type of person or character, and must always communicate some emotion or create some kind of reaction in you. Even when asleep, the head must show either repose or the fact that the subject is having a good or bad dream. In a picture, a head must always show an expression of some kind — because the viewer must feel that he is looking at a living, breathing person.

Blocking in the head

On this and the facing page are four views of a head — front view, side view, three-quarter front view, and three-quarter back view. (The three-quarter front view is between the front and the side views, and the three-quarter back view is between the side view and the straight back view.) These step-by-step demonstrations give you a fundamental method for blocking in or sketching the over-all shape of the head and locating the features. Actually, you'll find that the shape of the head and the exact size and location of the features will vary with each individual. One person's ear may be higher — another's lower. One may have a shorter nose — another's may be longer, etc. However, these principles of construction and proportion will help you get started. For this demonstration we have selected a man's head because the hair is shorter and the bone structure is more apparent than in a woman.

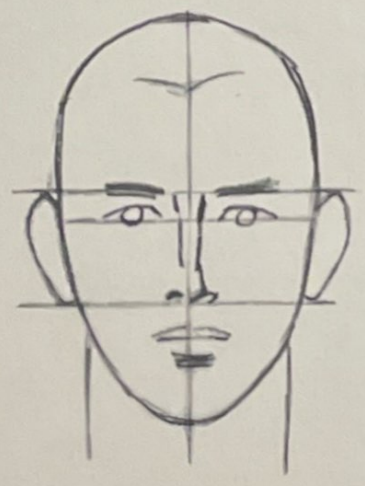
To draw each of these heads we start with simple shapes. In drawing the front view of an average head we begin with an egg shape. When drawing a side view we modify the egg because of the projecting chin.

Learn these simple shapes and measurements. They will give you a basic foundation of knowledge for drawing heads in any position. When practicing the head, draw the features very simply at first. Later on, we will take up the features in detail and show how to vary the basic head to create different types.

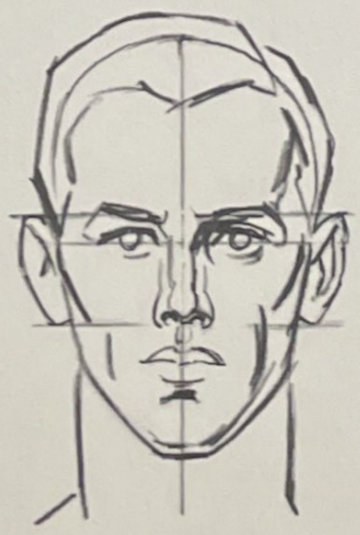


Front view

Sketch in an egglike shape with the tapering end at the chin. Draw a line down the middle so that you can balance the features. Halfway from top to bottom, draw a horizontal line and place the eyes on it as shown, about an eye's length apart.

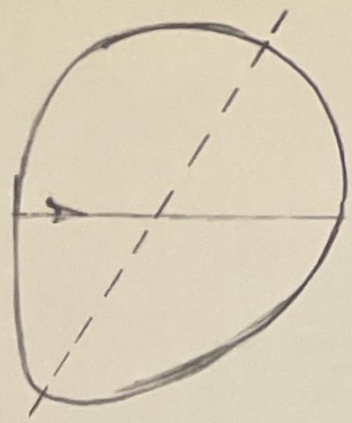


Place the eyebrows and locate the bottom of the nose about halfway between eyebrows and chin. The ear fits between the lines locating the eyebrow and the bottom of the nose. Place the mouth about one-third of the way between nose and chin.



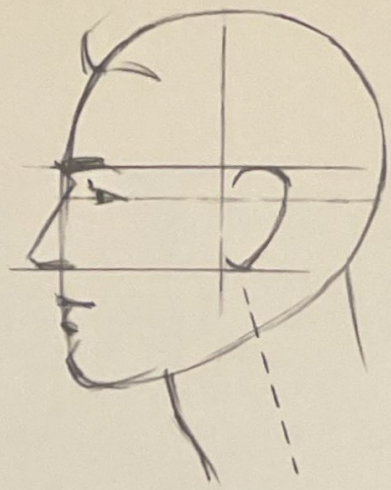
Keeping in mind the bone and muscle structure you studied in Lesson 5, suggest the planes of the head and nose. Note the depth of the eye socket. Carry the features along further. Sketch in the hair above the top of the skull.

You can now carry the head to any degree of finish you wish — but keep in mind the effect of the structure on the surface. Notice that the basic structure is still apparent, even though realistic features and modeling have been added.



Side view

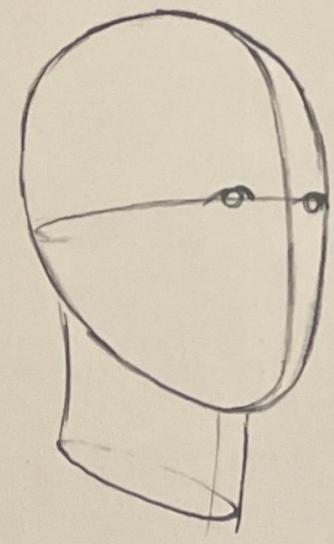
In drawing this view, widen the upper portion of the egg shape and tilt it as shown by the broken line. Draw a horizontal line halfway between skull and chin to locate the eye and draw it a short distance back from the front of the face.



To locate the features, use the same measurements as for the front view. Draw a vertical line halfway between the front and back of the skull and place the ear just behind it. The neck joins the head at an angle, as shown by the broken line.

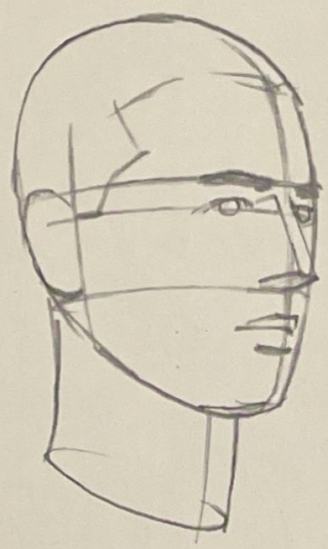
Now define the jaw, cheekbone, and features. Note the "cut-back" of the eye socket, the angle of the jawbone, and the planes of the nose and lips. Indicate the hair above the skull. Note how the hair grows forward over the temple.

In the finished drawing, notice how the bone and muscle structure affects the surface shading of the head and neck. Although the hair has been drawn in, there is still the feeling of the roundness of the skull beneath it.



Three-quarter front view

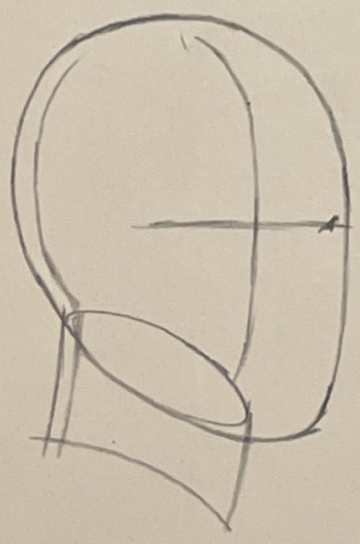
Tilt the modified egg shape as shown. Sketch the horizontal and vertical lines to locate the eyes. In this position they curve around the egg shape. The far eye will be a bit smaller, as it curves around the far side.



Locate the features and the ears as explained before. The line in front of the ear also indicates the back edge of the jaw. The nose projects in front of the line down the center of the face and slightly covers the corner of the far eye.

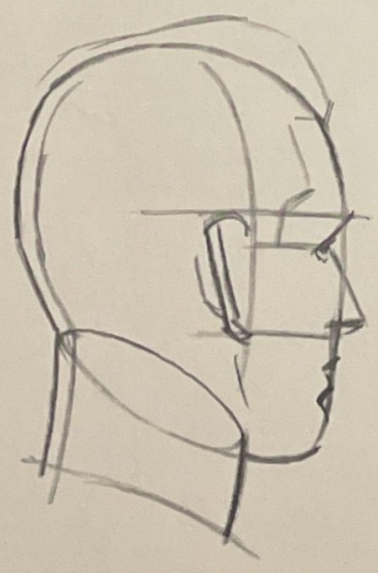
Indicate the side plane of the head and nose. See how the junction of nose and forehead forms the cut-back of the eye sockets. Block in the hair so it fits over the skull. A line down the center of the front of the neck helps plan the form here.

In the finished drawing, observe what happens when the features are turned in this "halfway" position. The near eye and brow are larger than the far ones. The far half of the mouth appears smaller as it curves around the face.

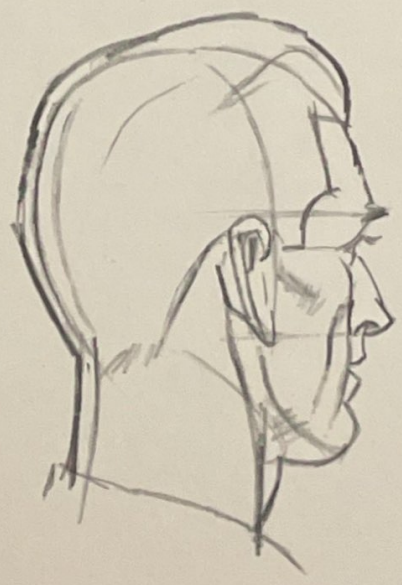


Three-quarter back view

Tilt the modified egg shape and draw the cylindrical neck. Over the curved surface, sketch lines representing the center of the back of the head and the center of the side. The position of these lines will vary according to how far the head is turned.



Only small parts of the features will be seen, but they are located by the same lines you used in the other views. Think of these lines as running around to the front of the face. Imagine where the features are, even when you can't see them.

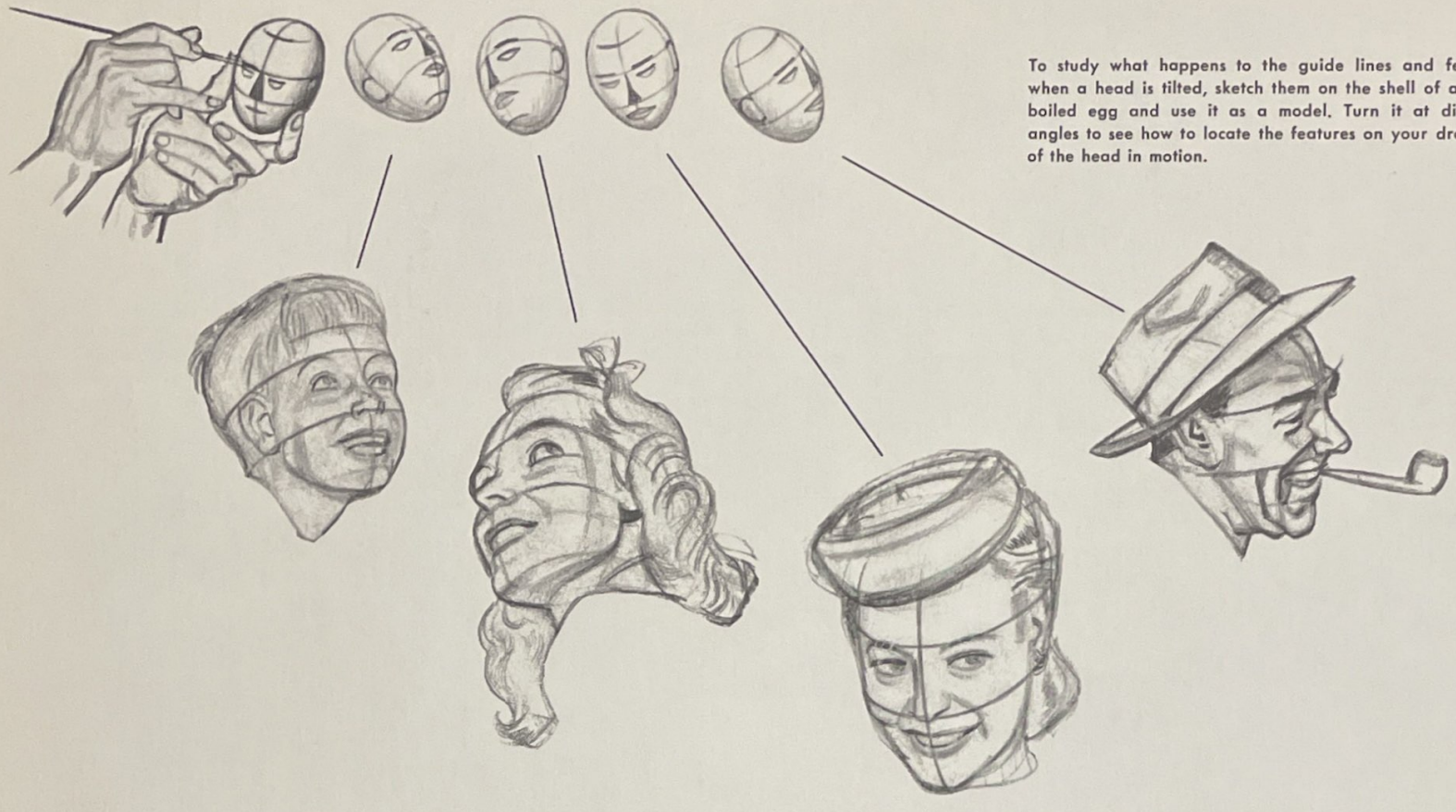


Develop the features carefully and give them solid form. Show the thickness of the ear and how its back edge slants out from the skull. Draw the shape of the hairline at the temple. Indicate the large muscle at the side of the neck.

Since so little of each of the features can be seen in this view, great care must be taken to draw correctly what does show. Carefully indicate the cheekbone, nostril, jaw, and ear, and construct them as three-dimensional forms.

Lesson **6** Famous Artists Course

Constructing the head and hands



To study what happens to the guide lines and features when a head is tilted, sketch them on the shell of a hard-boiled egg and use it as a model. Turn it at different angles to see how to locate the features on your drawings of the head in motion.

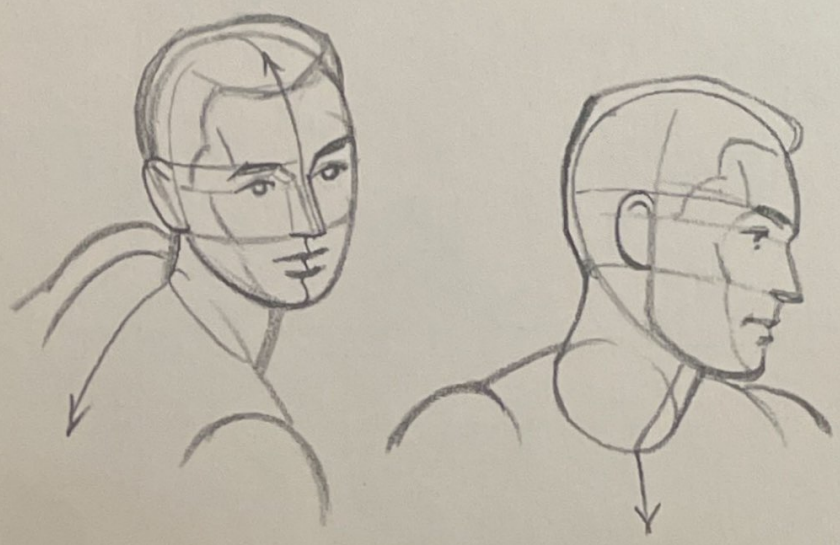
Drawing the head in different positions

On the last two pages we showed how to draw the head and locate the features in a few simple views. Actually, a head is hardly ever seen in these "straight-on" views. It is usually tilted or leaned to one side or the other; it may be looking up or down or be turned in a different direction from the body. In these tilted positions it will not be possible to measure off the locations of the features the same way we did in the straight views. We will have to rely on our eye to tell us if the head is correctly drawn. The drawings on these two pages show why this is so.

In the drawings, the first thing you will notice is that the "measuring lines" become curves or ellipses as they run around the solid form of the head. A good way to study how tilting affects these lines is to draw a simple set of guide lines and features on the shell of an egg, as we demonstrate at the top of the page. By studying what happens to these guide lines as the egg is tilted and by making many sketches similar to those at the bottom of the page, you will learn to estimate the placement and direction of these various lines correctly. As you work, remember to draw through so that you will understand what happens on the far side of the form as well as on the side which you can see. In this way you can relate the various features and planes of the head correctly.

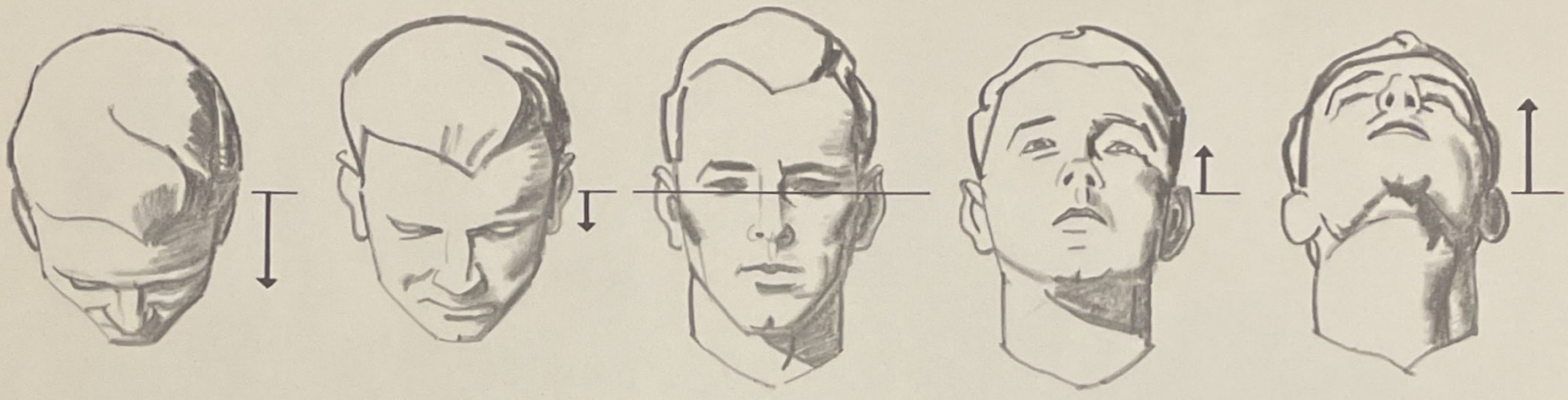
You will notice on the drawings below that a line runs down the middle of each face. This is not the simple guide line you first put down the center of the face. It actually goes in and out over the various features, back under the chin, down the neck and onto the chest. This line helps place the features in the correct position and at the same angle as the head. It also establishes the proper depth of the nose and underpart of the chin. In actual practice it is not always necessary to draw this line, but you should at least imagine it.

At this stage, draw the neck as a simple cylinder which fits onto the upper torso. Notice that it is somewhat lower in front than in back. In your more finished drawings you will suggest the muscles and tendons of the neck — but take care not to lose the feeling of its solid cylindrical form.

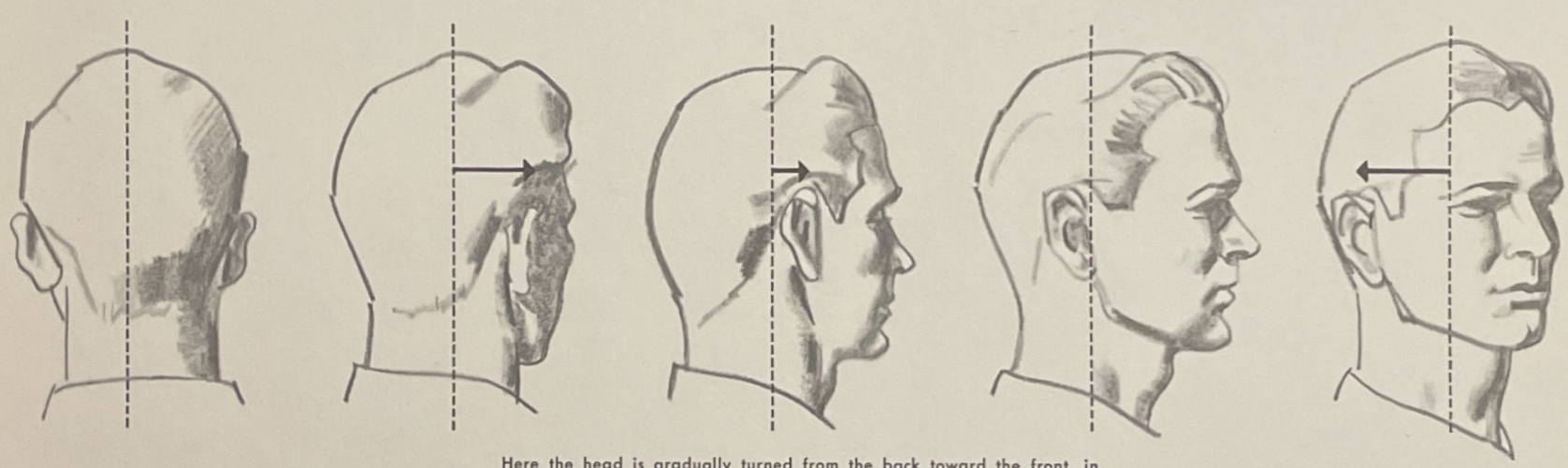


The surest way to construct heads and locate features properly is by means of guide lines "drawn through" to the other side. These lines become ellipses as the head tilts. Think of how a "center line" would follow the surface of the forehead, nose, lips and chin. In any action, continue this line under the chin and down the neck to help relate head, neck, and chest to each other.

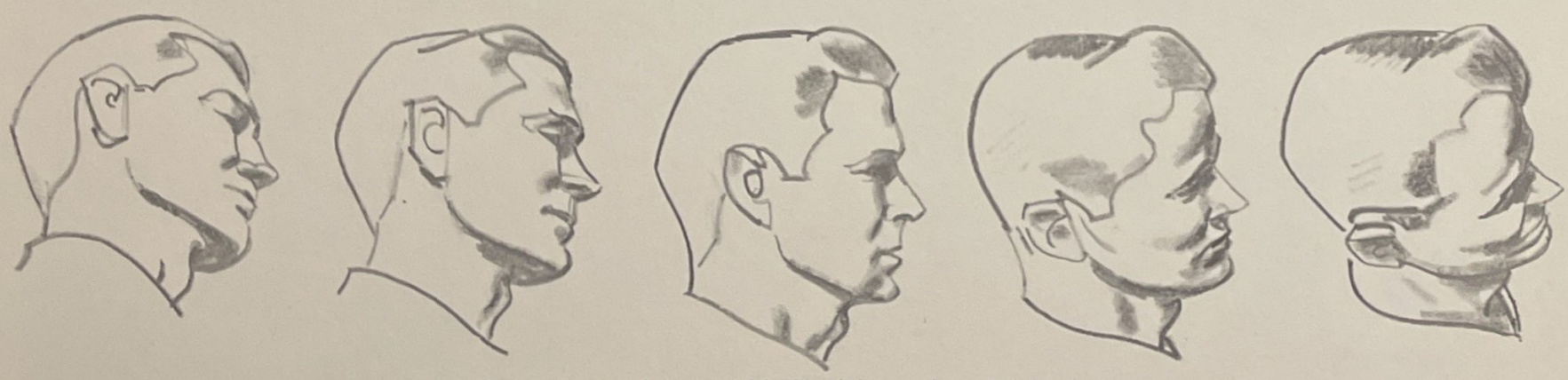
The features look different as the head turns or tilts



In these five front views the head is gradually raised from an extreme position of looking down to one of looking almost straight up. Note that, in the first drawing, the tip of the nose covers the mouth and the eyes are almost hidden beneath the brows. In the full-face view a line runs through the eyes. The arrows show how far they move above or below this line as the head is raised or lowered.



Here the head is gradually turned from the back toward the front, in each view showing more of the features. The change in the position of the features is dramatically demonstrated by the ear. Note the changing distances of the ear from the center line as the head turns.

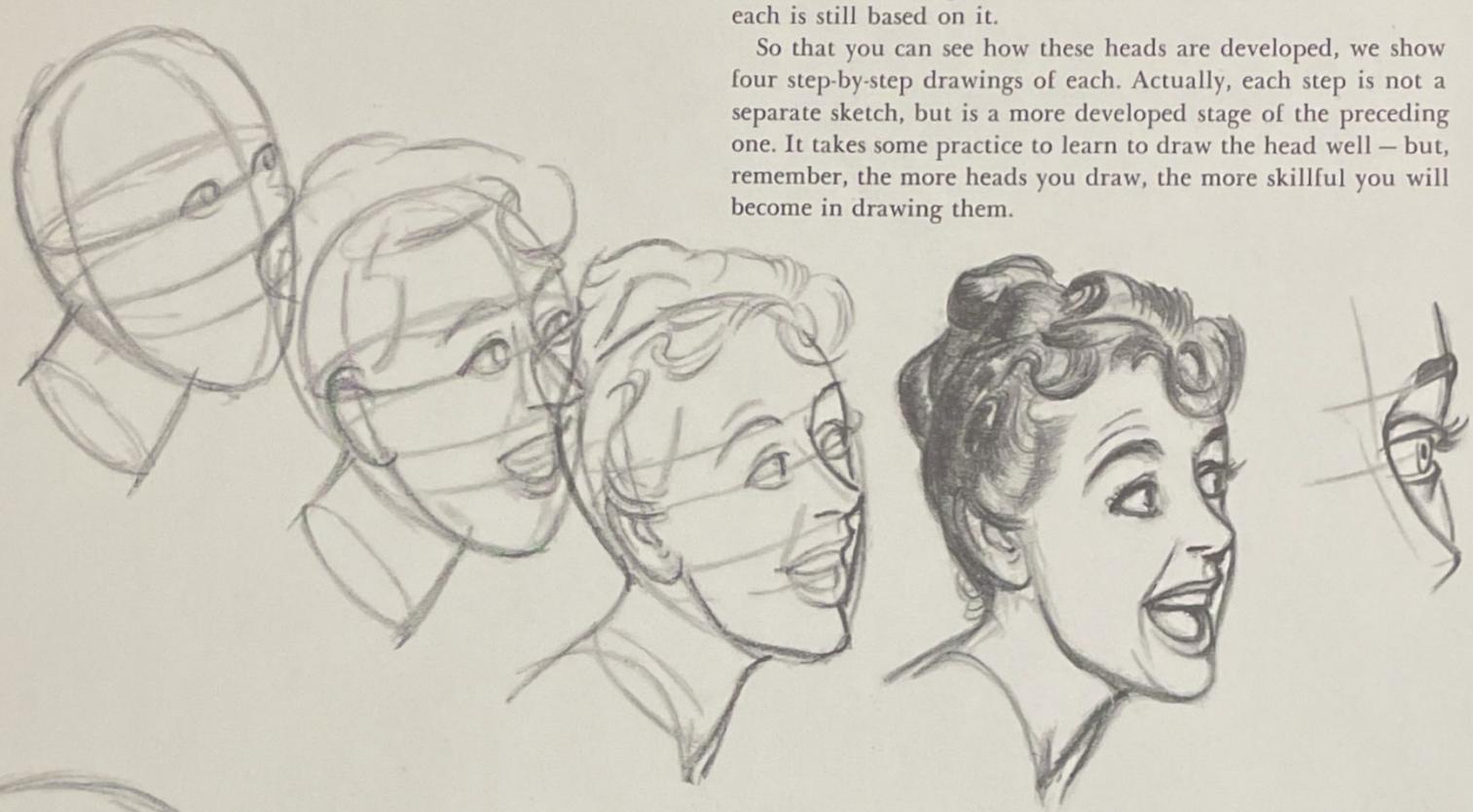


Here a side view of the head shifts from below to above. Each feature appears different in each view. Again the ear demonstrates the kinds of changes in position and appearance to look for in each of the features. Study how the features and planes of the face change in each of the views on this page.

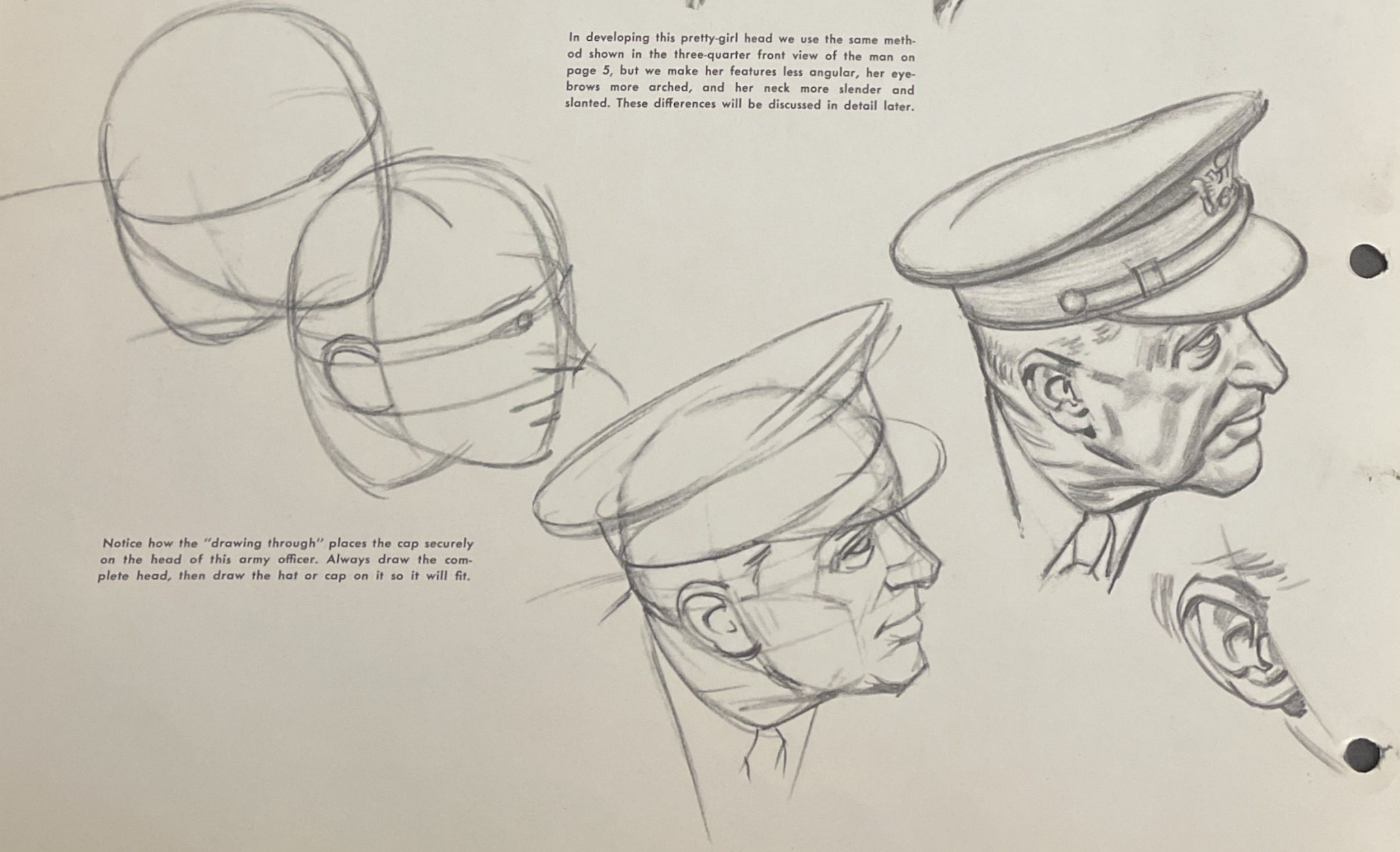
You learn to draw by drawing — ALBERT DORNE

So far we have been concerned with drawing the basic head in different positions. Now we will begin to use it to create various human types. While all of the heads on these pages differ somewhat from the simple head discussed earlier, the structure of each is still based on it.

So that you can see how these heads are developed, we show four step-by-step drawings of each. Actually, each step is not a separate sketch, but is a more developed stage of the preceding one. It takes some practice to learn to draw the head well — but, remember, the more heads you draw, the more skillful you will become in drawing them.



In developing this pretty-girl head we use the same method shown in the three-quarter front view of the man on page 5, but we make her features less angular, her eyebrows more arched, and her neck more slender and slanted. These differences will be discussed in detail later.



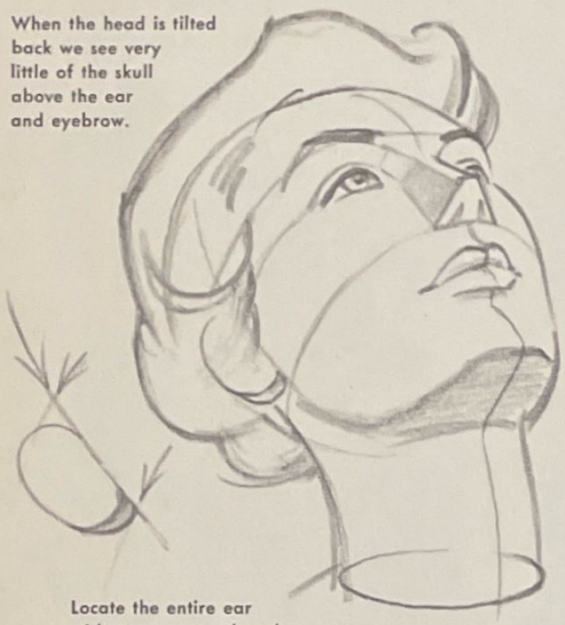
Notice how the "drawing through" places the cap securely on the head of this army officer. Always draw the complete head, then draw the hat or cap on it so it will fit.

Now we draw a real character! As we sketch, we use the same construction methods but change the proportions of individual features. Here, for example, we give our character a large lower lip, a fold of loose flesh on the chin.

These drawings were made on tracing paper with an HB and a 2B pencil.

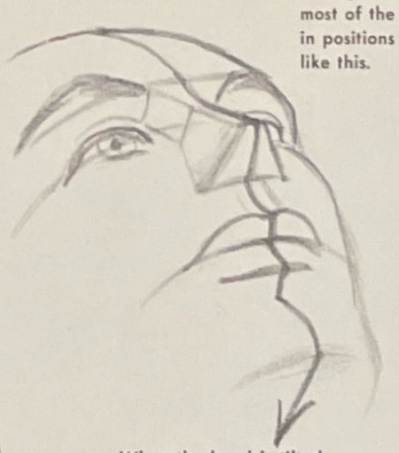
The proportions of a baby's head are different from an adult's but the principles of construction remain the same. Use the vertical and horizontal guide lines to help place the features correctly.

This tilted view shows how the features are easily located by "drawing through" the guide lines. Note how the eyes, brows, and mouth "wrap around" the curved surface of the head.



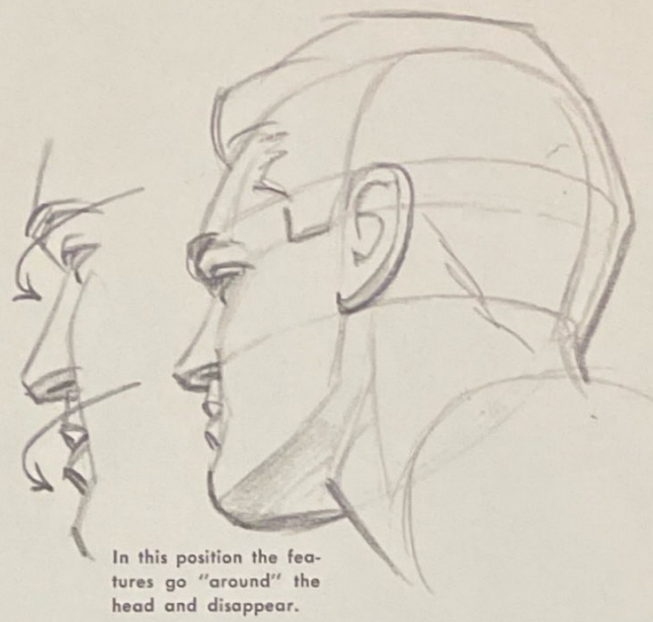
When the head is tilted back we see very little of the skull above the ear and eyebrow.

Locate the entire ear with care — even though most of it may not show in the final picture.



The tip of the nose hides most of the far eye in positions like this.

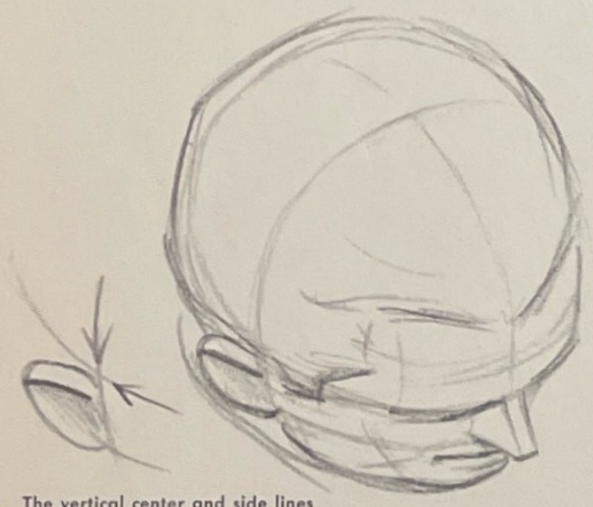
When the head is tilted, use this center line to relate the features to each other and the three-dimensional head.



In this position the features go "around" the head and disappear.

Helpful reminders in drawing the head

Here we show you how to solve some common problems in drawing the head. In each case the solution lies in (1) deciding which way the head and features are tilted, (2) thinking of the features as solid, related forms and (3) drawing through. Notice that as the head turns away, some features overlap or hide others from view, some disappear completely.

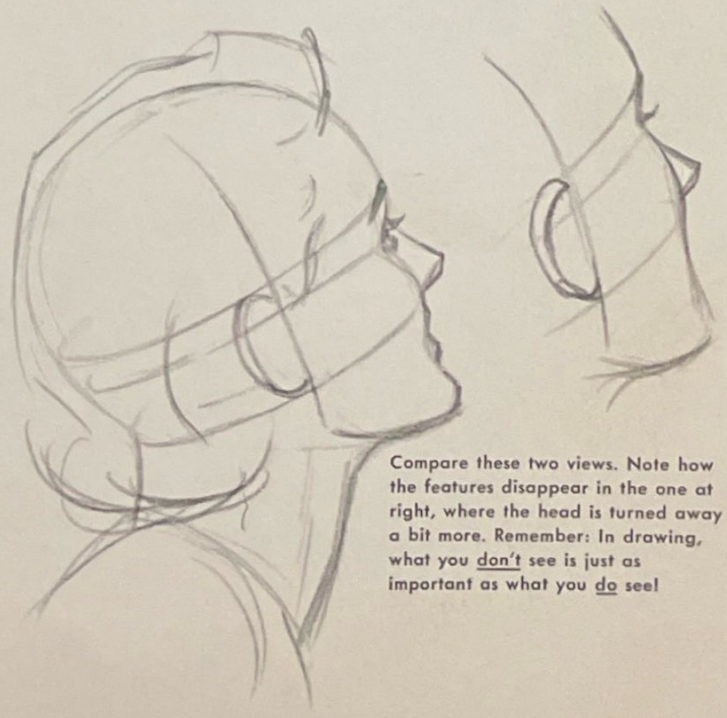


The vertical center and side lines cross at the top center of the skull. Both are crossed by the brow line as it is drawn around the head to locate the ear and nose.

The forehead hides the eyes and part of the nose, and the nose hides part of the mouth.

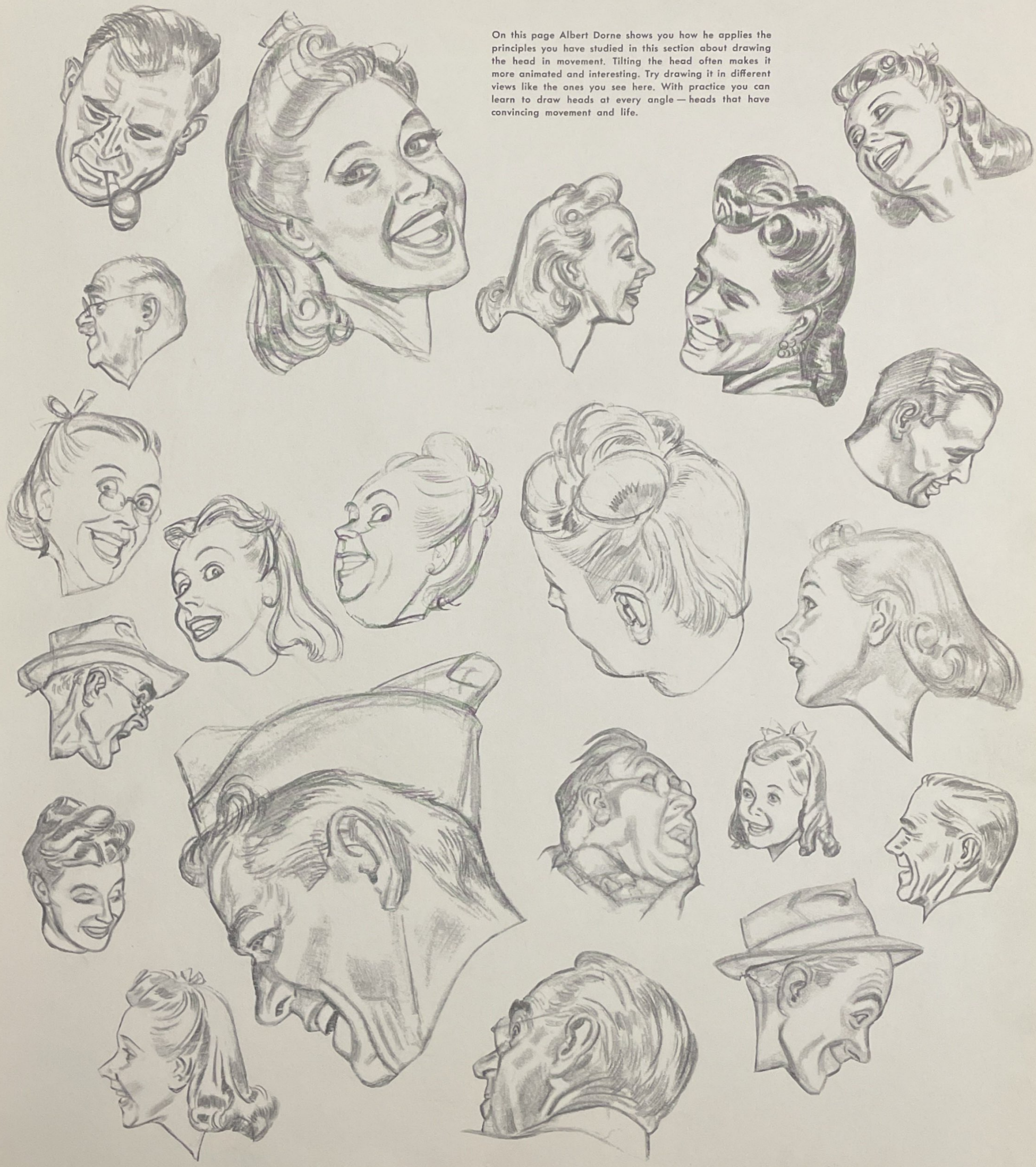
When the nose is "blocked in" accurately it helps establish the eye socket. Eyes and mouth curve around the head.

When the head is tilted back or viewed from below, emphasize the underplanes so that the angle is unmistakable. Notice how the nose hides one eye and most of the eye socket.



Compare these two views. Note how the features disappear in the one at right, where the head is turned away a bit more. Remember: In drawing, what you don't see is just as important as what you do see!

On this page Albert Dorne shows you how he applies the principles you have studied in this section about drawing the head in movement. Tilting the head often makes it more animated and interesting. Try drawing it in different views like the ones you see here. With practice you can learn to draw heads at every angle — heads that have convincing movement and life.



The features

Every artist since Leonardo da Vinci has found the features an exciting and intriguing subject to draw. No two faces are exactly alike, so every set of features calls for some study and observation. Basically, however, one face is very much like the next – it has two eyes, a nose, a mouth, a chin, etc. When you have learned to draw the features in correct relationship to each other and to the entire face you will have learned the basis for drawing convincing heads and eventually specific people.

In this section of the lesson we shall study the basic construction of each of the features and make a simple drawing analysis of them, so that you will understand them in detail. Then we shall put them all together and see how to draw them in combination. Here we shall concentrate on standard or typical features – later on in your Course we shall study how to create different types of characters by varying the normal features.

The eye

Besides being the most expressive feature of the face, the eye is the most delicate. Nature has protected it well, however. It is set deep in a bony recess in the face – the eye socket. Above, the eye is protected by the frontal bone of the forehead, below by the cheekbone, and on the inner side by the nose. You must place the eye accurately in this socket.

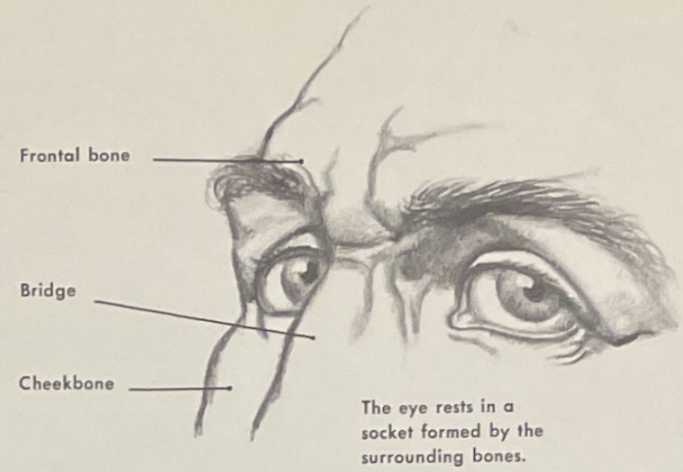
The eyeball is round in shape. Keep this in mind when you draw it – even though you show only a small part of the eye, that part should suggest a feeling of roundness.

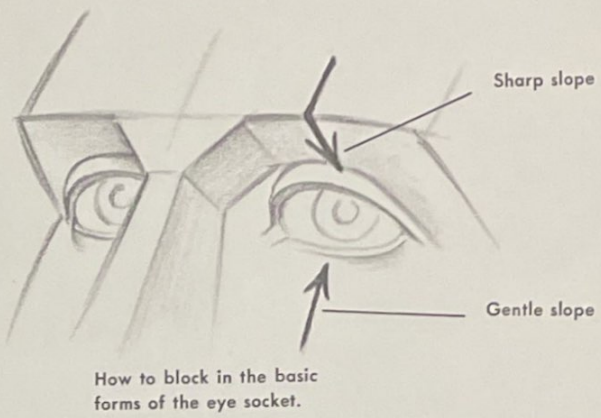
Three parts of the eye are of particular importance to the artist. One is the small dark center, called the pupil, through which we see. Surrounding the pupil is a colored area called the iris. Around this is the white of the eye. Since the eye is always moist, it reflects any light that strikes it. This reflection forms a bright spot which we call a high light. Where this high light will be depends upon the direction from which the light is coming. In any picture in which the eyes are conspicuous, the high light is a most important detail – place it with care.

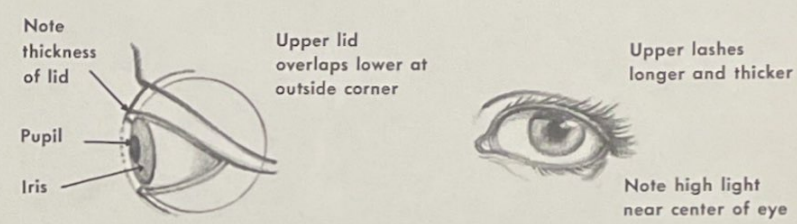
The eye has two lids to protect it – an upper one and a lower one. The upper lid is the more active and moves up and down over the entire exposed part of the eye. The lower lid is almost stationary – it moves very little.

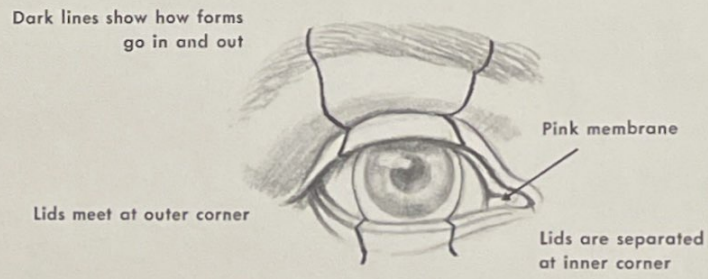
The upper and lower lids are fringed with lashes. These shade the eye and serve as sensitive feelers to protect it – the instant they are touched the eyes close instinctively.

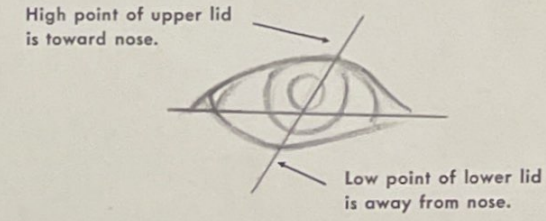
You will notice that there is a difference between the inner and outer corners of the eye. At the outer corner the upper lid overhangs the lower one. At the inner corner, when the eyes are open, the lids do not unite – they are separated by a narrow recess of pinkish membrane. From this point the upper lid rises abruptly and curves over the round form of the eyeball to join the cheek at the outer corner of the eye. The lower lid, which is thinner than the upper, curves gently downward from the inner corner to a point beyond the center of the eye. Then it curves upward, meeting the upper lid almost at a right angle.

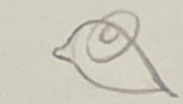




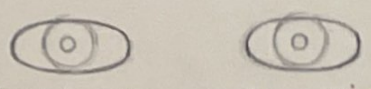

Note thickness of lid
Pupil
Iris
Upper lid overlaps lower at outside corner
Upper lashes longer and thicker
Note high light near center of eye





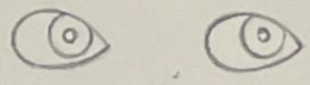


How to sketch the eye and lids

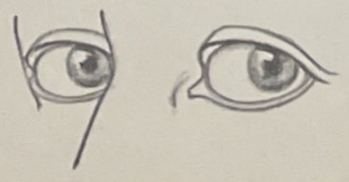


1 In front view, opening between lids is an oval.

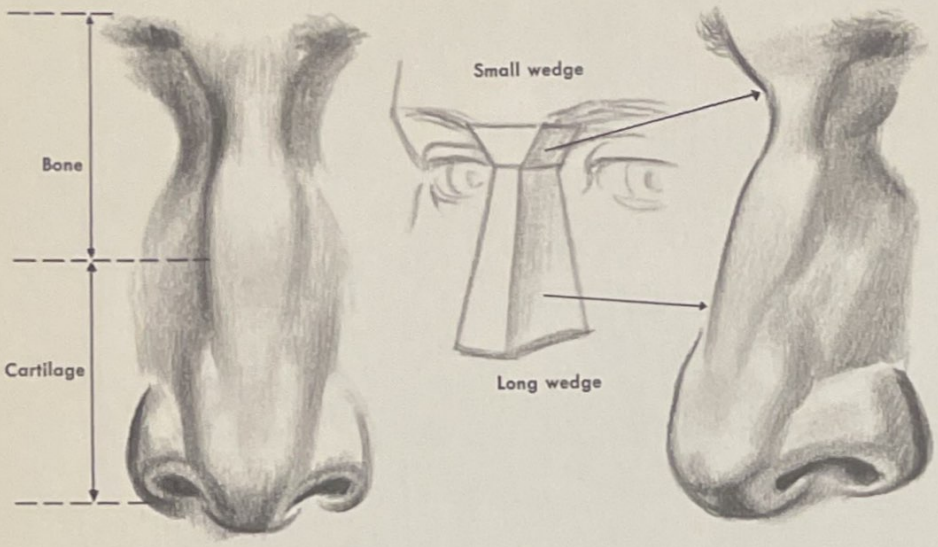
2 Sketch lids so they follow the roundness of the eyeballs.

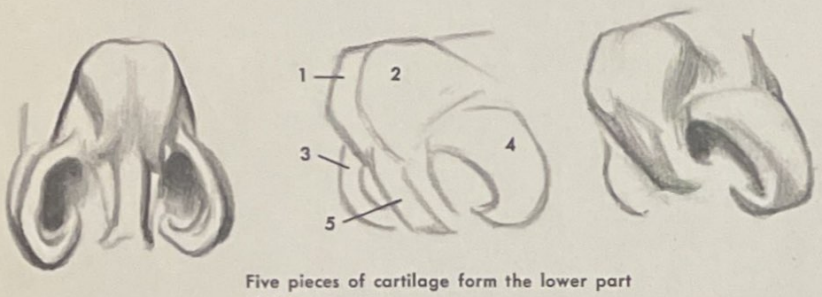


1 In three-quarter view, opening between lids is egg shaped.



2 Sketch lids so they "go around" far side of eyeball. Near eye is larger.





Five pieces of cartilage form the lower part of the nose.

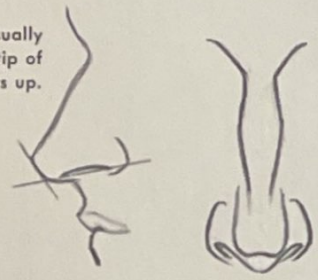
The nose

The nose is a long, wedge-shaped form, wide and thick at the bottom, narrow and thin at the top. It is joined to the forehead by another small wedge-shaped form.

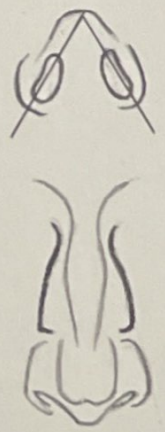
Feel your own nose and observe that the upper part is hard and the lower part softer. The upper half has a bony structure, the lower half is cartilage, an elastic tissue. The shape of the nose bone influences the general shape of the nose. For example, if the nose bone projects prominently the nose takes the shape we call aquiline or Roman. If the bone is broken, as it often is in prize fighters, the nose becomes flat. In a pretty girl, the bone is likely to be short, with a slight inward curve.

Five pieces of cartilage make up the lower part of the nose. Two of these form the tip, two form the nostrils and a fifth separates the nostrils. The cartilage is flexible and responds to the pull of the facial muscles. They make the nostrils dilate in expressions of fear or anger, in a smile or a sneer. The cartilage part of the nose continues to grow and change shape with age.

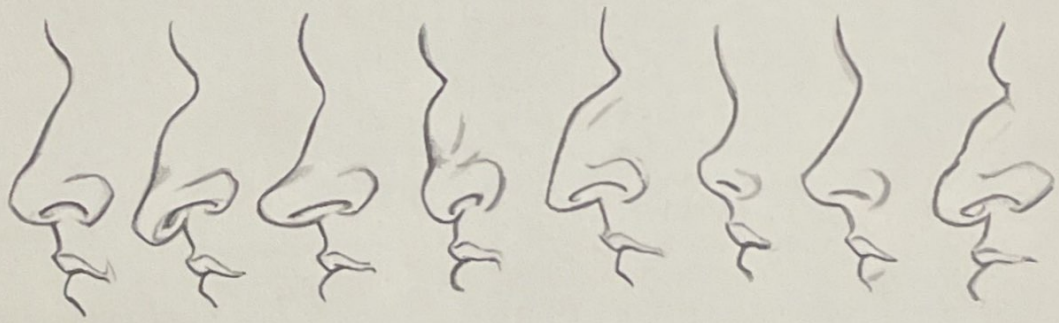
Nostrils usually slant down — tip of nose slants up.



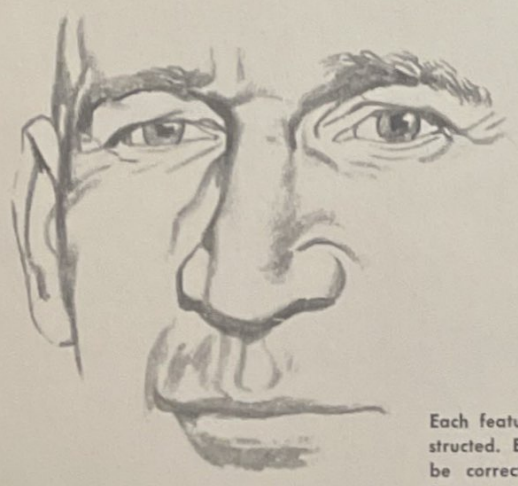
Nostrils slant out toward back of nose.

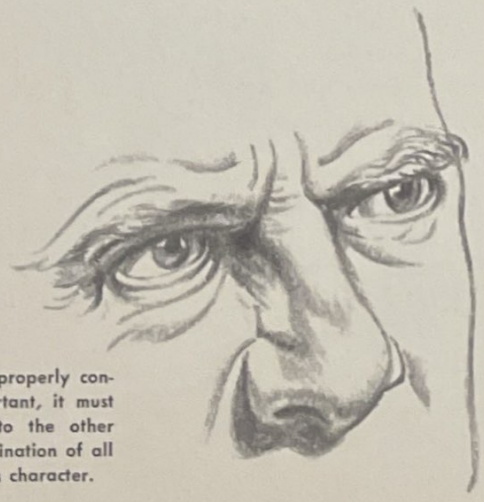


Important points and shapes to remember in drawing the nose



Noses come in an endless variety of shapes. They affect the appearance of the face more than any other single feature.





Each feature must be properly constructed. Equally important, it must be correctly related to the other features. It is the combination of all the features that makes character.

The shape of the mouth and lips is influenced by the teeth.

The mouth

Just as the nose builds character in the face, the mouth gives it animation. No feature in the entire head is more flexible. From moment to moment, from mood to mood, the mouth is in action, changing its size and shape.

Although the mouth is all flesh, it owes much of its shape to the bone and teeth across which it stretches. For dramatic proof of this, observe a person who has lost his teeth. His mouth is loose and sunken in and less of the lips shows. The more the "dental arch" curves the more the mouth curves.

The upper lip is quite different from the lower one. To grasp this difference quickly and draw the lips correctly it is helpful to think of the upper lip as having three sections and the lower one as having only two. Always consider both lips in relation to each other – don't draw them separately.

Examine the illustration of the mouth in profile and you will see that the lips are located on an imaginary line sloping backward from near the tip of the nose to the furrow at the top of the chin. Naturally, this varies with individuals.

It is extremely important to place the corners of the mouth correctly in relation to the center of the lips. We can best see how the mouth curves toward its corners in a three-quarter view.

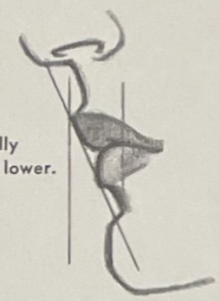
Where the corner of the mouth runs into the fleshy fullness of the lower cheek there is a slight depression or hollow. Study it carefully. This hollow is usually more pronounced on a man than on a woman.

As the corners of the mouth are pulled back in a laugh or smile, the upper lip tends to become straighter and the lower lip more curved. When the mouth is open, as in a smile, the upper teeth are visible, but we seldom see much of the lower teeth except in extreme action of the mouth.

Of course mouths vary a great deal from the "ideal" ones we discuss and picture here. Some lips are thicker and others thinner. But most mouths are constructed as we describe them.

The upper lip has three sections — lower lip has two.

Upper lip is flatter and angular, lower lip full and round.



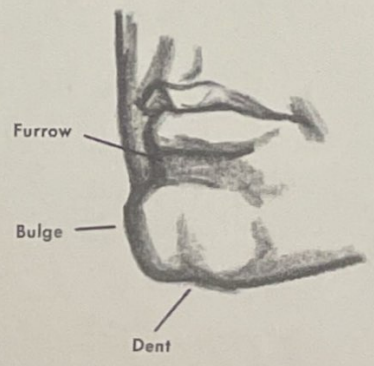
In side view, upper lip usually projects above lower.

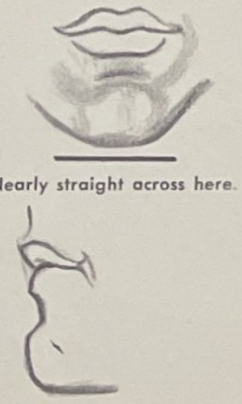
High points of curve of upper lip are near center — low points of bottom lip are further out from center.

A smile or laugh shows the upper teeth. The depressions at corners of the mouth are pulled back and become noticeable.

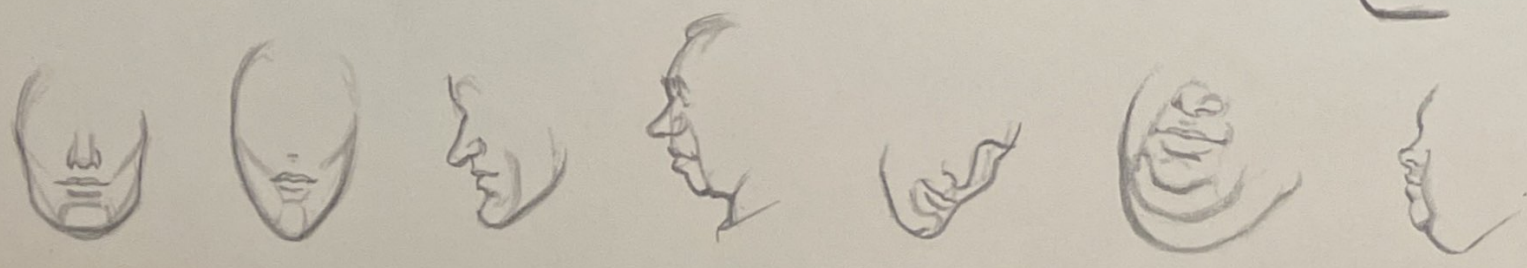
The chin

The chin sticks forward or "bulges" most just above its center. This is easiest to see from the side. From the front the chin appears nearly straight across the bottom, with a slight depression or dent in the center. Like all of the other features, chins vary from person to person. You will notice that one person has a round chin, the next person has a pointed chin; chins may be narrow or broad, or flat and square. Some chins have a distinct dimple or furrow.

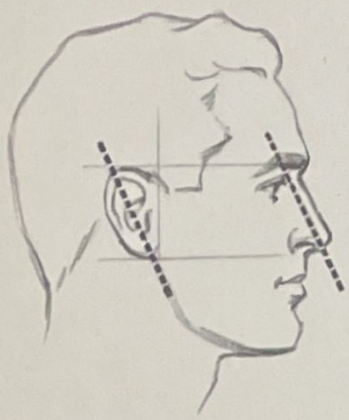




Nearly straight across here.



As with the nose and other features, types of chins are infinite. They often suggest a person's character.



Broken lines show that ear slants the same as the nose. Solid lines locate the position of the ear.

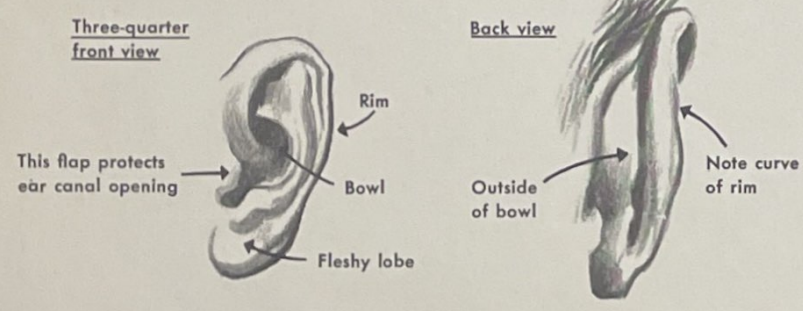
The ear

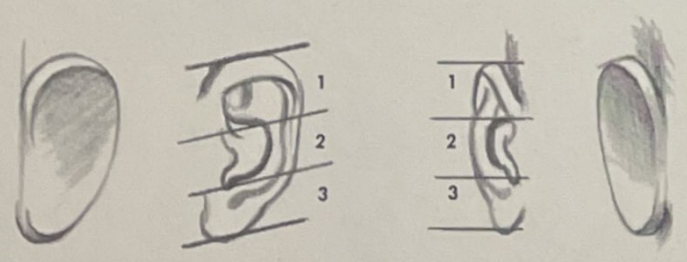
When you draw the ear it is important to place it in its correct position on the head, as we demonstrated earlier in the lesson. The top of the ear is on a line with the eyebrow, the bottom of the ear is on a line with the base of the nose. In a side view the front of the ear is on a line halfway between the front and the back of the head. The side-view diagram shows this and the angle of the ear in relation to the nose.

Looking at the ears from the front, you can see that they slant down and in, parallel to the sloping planes of the side of the head. Always draw the ears close to the head unless you are drawing a specific person whose ears project away from it.

Ears vary greatly from person to person, but they all have the same basic "shell-like" construction. The ear is mostly made up of cartilage, with a soft, fleshy lobe at the bottom. In the middle there is a "bowl" shape which is surrounded by whorls and curves. These curves are different in different people. Their most usual design is shown in the drawings here.

Ears normally lie on head at this angle.





Think of the ear as a simple disk divided into three sections with the bowl in the center.

Helpful suggestions for studying the head and features

You, as a student, will find it rewarding to pay close attention to the little details that give life and reality to a feature or a face. You should make many sketches of all parts of the head. As you study and put down on paper the things you observe, your knowledge of the head will become deeper and more intimate.

A knowledge of the basic construction of the head – of its planes, forms, and features – is of immeasurable help. It gives you the solid foundation on which you can develop successful finished drawings. But, important as this knowledge is, again we wish to impress upon you that the final answer to learning how to draw people is TO DRAW REAL PEOPLE.

Begin right now to look around you – to study and sketch all the people who make up your life – your family, your friends, your neighbors. People love to be sketched and will gladly sit for you. Observe everyone closely – note his eyes, the shape of his nose, his mouth, the special characteristics of his face. All humans are different in appearance and you will learn a great deal if you will only SEE, OBSERVE, AND DRAW them.

Carry a sketchbook with you constantly, and draw the persons you see when riding the bus or waiting anywhere. Make quick sketches of their heads, noting anything that is different about them. Your sketchbook can fit into your pocket and be in your hands in an instant to record what you see. Every great artist has been helped in no small measure by his most faithful friend – his sketchbook.

You learn to draw by drawing

Male and female heads – differences

When we draw male and female heads, we usually follow certain ideal standards designed to make our men look really masculine, our women really feminine. To achieve these effects, there are a number of outstanding differences between the male and female heads that we must take into account. The strongest difference is in the shapes that make up the head. In the male these are usually angular – contrasting sharply with the rounder, softer forms in the woman's face, which flow gracefully into one another.

As a rule, the bony structure is more pronounced in the male head, particularly in the bony ridge above the brows, the angular jaw, and the square chin. In the woman, all of these features tend to have smoother, gentler curves. Her face tends to be oval shaped, as opposed to the man's, which we show as more blocky and rectangular.

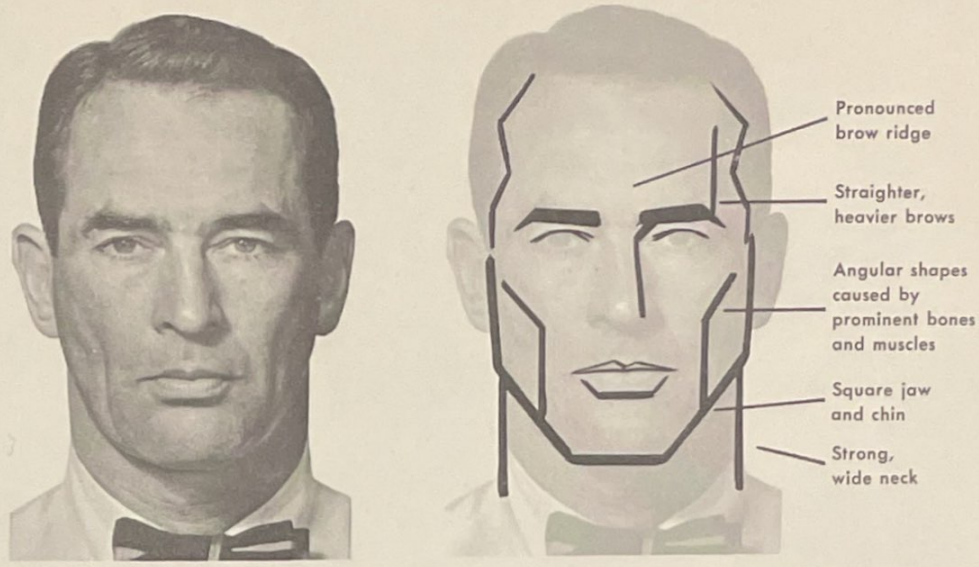
There is a difference in eyebrows, too. Generally we make the man's eyebrows heavier, straighter, and closer to the eyes. The woman's eyebrow arches upward, leaving a larger area between it and the upper lid.

A woman's nose and ears are smaller and more delicately defined than a man's. The bridge of the nose is much more prominent in the man. He has a wider, stronger neck, too. In profile, it is more vertical than the woman's.

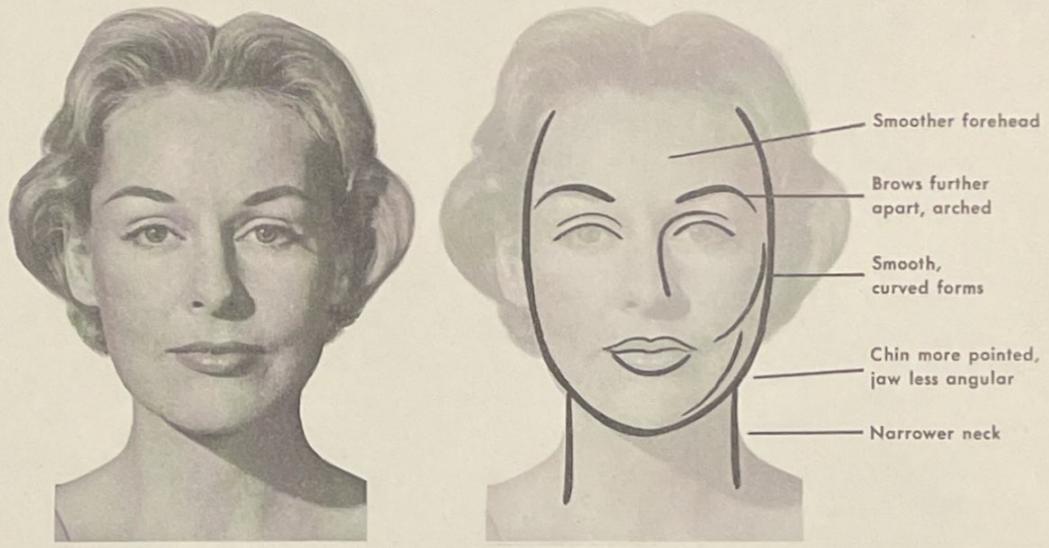
As the man matures he develops larger, deeper wrinkles, while the woman develops smaller ones because her skin is finer textured and her bones and muscles are less prominent.

As you study faces you will find that many individuals have one or more of the physical traits that we have attributed to the opposite sex. For instance, some women may have a rather square jaw or a strong frontal bone. Some men may have a small upturned nose or some other trait you would usually expect to find in the woman's head. Careful analysis, however, will prove that by emphasizing the traits we have mentioned, you can more successfully create a definite feeling of masculinity or femininity in the head.

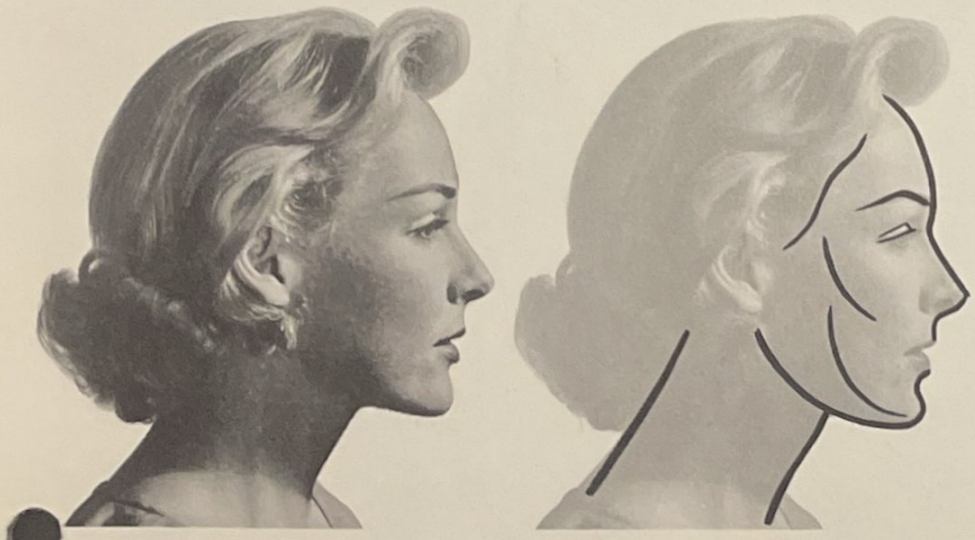
Study carefully the faces you see all about you. Get in the habit of observing people to fix these points in your mind. You don't have to be at your drawing board to study the construction and variety of facial features – you can do it on the bus, on the street, or wherever you see people.


Pronounced brow ridge
Straighter, heavier brows
Angular shapes caused by prominent bones and muscles
Square jaw and chin
Strong, wide neck

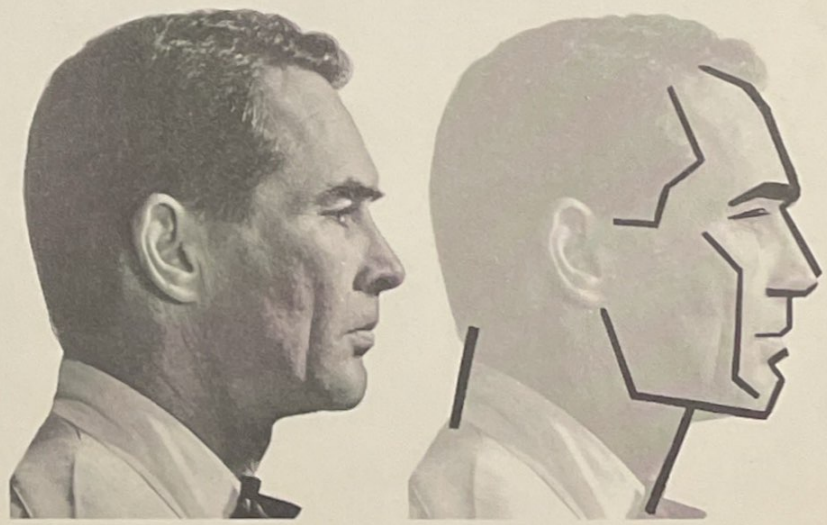
The male head is square and angular, with a strong jaw, as the diagram at the right points out. Compare it with the diagram of the woman's head below.



The female head is generally more oval-shaped, with soft, round, curving forms. These are smoother and more delicate than the forms in the male head.



The side view of the female head shows the long, graceful slant of the neck, the arching brow, the delicate forms of the nose, mouth and chin and the generally smooth features.



The side view of the male head shows the shorter, straighter neck, overhanging forehead, heavy brow, strong angular forms of nose, mouth and chin and generally coarser features.

How the light and shadow patterns on the head change as the light source changes.

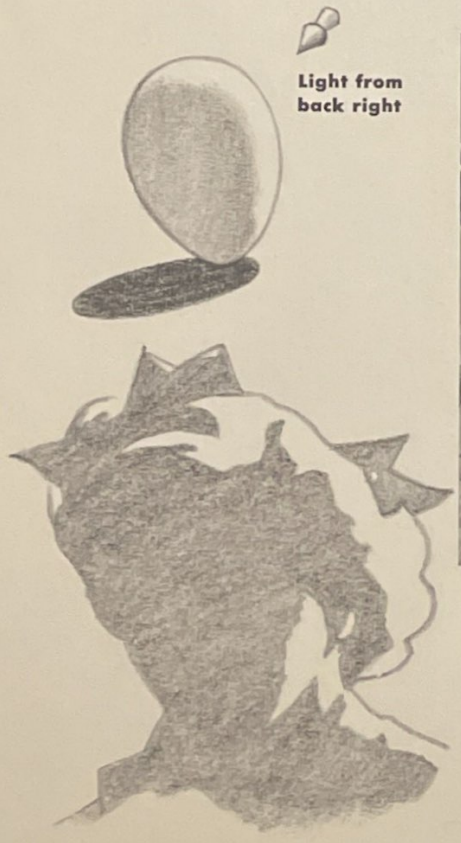
Front | Front left | Back left | Back | Right | Front right

This head is lighted from the front. The planes on the front of the face are in light while the side and back are in shadow. In general, the light-struck planes are painted in with values from the right portion of the scale. The shadow tones are found on the left side of the scale. Note that parts of the eye socket, nose, and lips are definitely shadow areas.

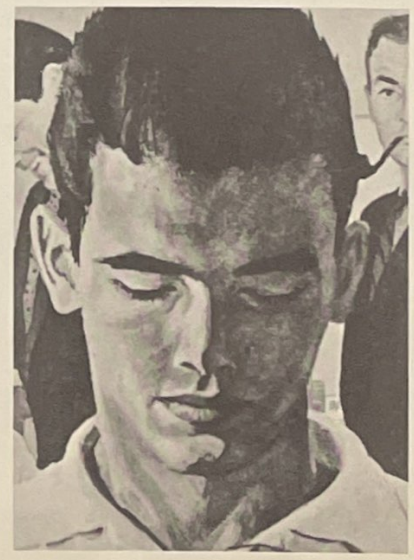
Light and shade on the head

If you use light and shade on the head, make sure that you keep it simple. You see simplicity of lighting when you look at a head which is lighted from a single source – for example, a lamp alongside a chair or the direct rays of a late afternoon sun. With such single light sources you can easily see two main tones – the tone of the lightstruck areas and that of the shadow areas. You will also see some variation of tone within each area. The tones in the shadow will vary because some light will be reflected there by the surroundings. In the light areas the planes turned slightly away from the light source will be a bit darker. The edge of the shadow begins where the planes of the face turn decisively away from the light.

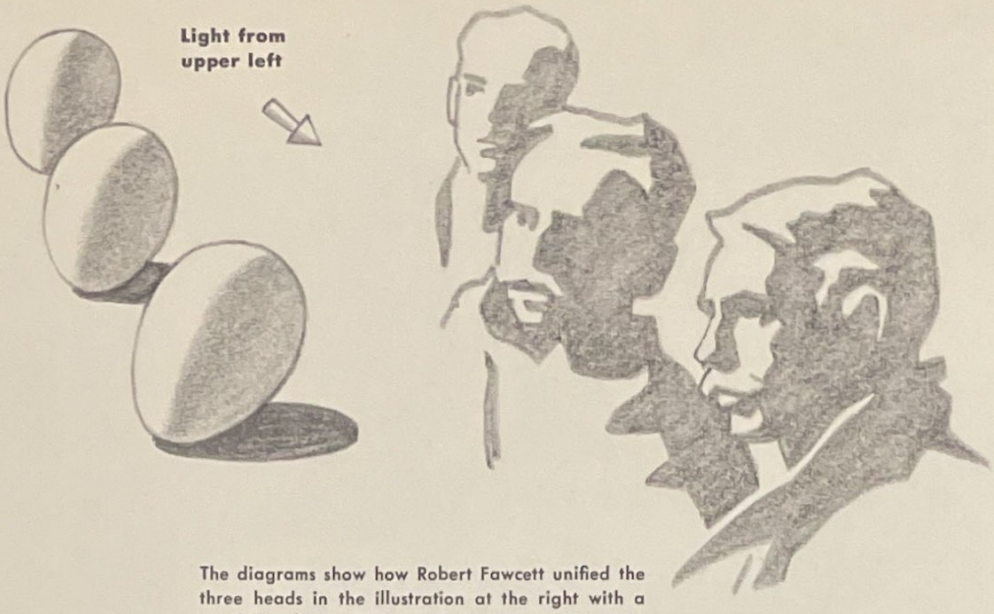
When you draw or paint a head lighted in this simple way, the modeling in the light area should not be so dark as to break up or confuse the over-all light tone. The same principle applies to your modeling in the shadows. Study the "right and wrong" demonstrations on the next page and keep them in mind as you work. The Number One mistake in applying tone to a head is to confuse light and shadow values. Students very often think that the medium is causing them difficulty, when actually it is the incorrect values they are using.



Here, as shown on the egg, the light comes from back right. This gives a very small light area and a large shadow area, as shown in the diagram at lower left. First plan your light and shade pattern in this simple way, then add slightly darker or lighter tones as necessary, without destroying the pattern.

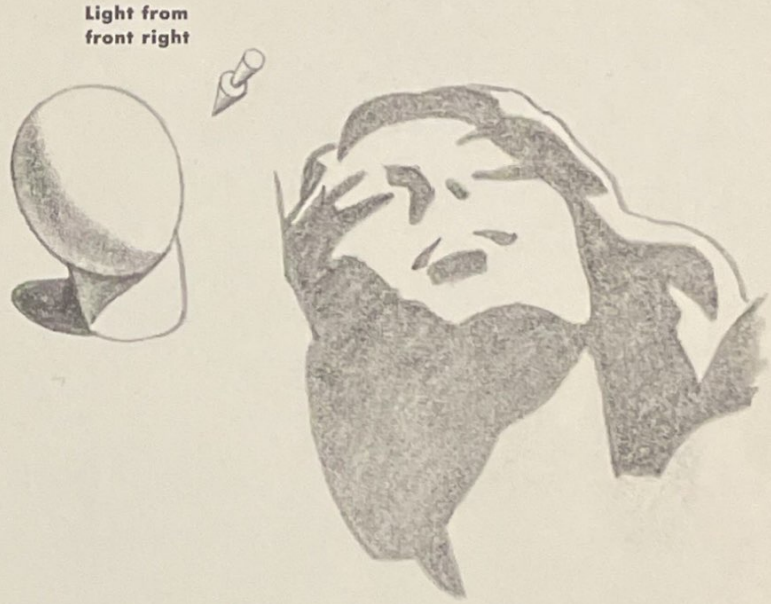


Here Al Parker has used a side light. Notice how he has varied the tones inside the light and shadow areas without losing his strong pattern. Compare the light and shade diagram above with his painting.



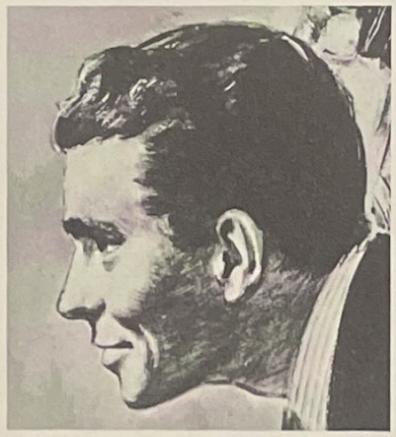
The diagrams show how Robert Fawcett unified the three heads in the illustration at the right with a carefully planned light and shadow arrangement. Although he modeled them with almost flat tones, all three have a strong light and shadow pattern.

Avoid complicated lighting effects. When you encounter them, simplify these effects by applying the principles you see demonstrated here. Don't ever lose sight of the simple separation of light and shadow areas as demonstrated by the egg. Naturally, because the head has features that protrude or cut back from its general surface, the modeling in both light and shadow areas is not so simple and obvious as on the egg. Decide where your light source will be and plan your light and shadow pattern before you start to render.



How wrong values destroy the form

Wrong: Dark tones on the light side of the face and light tones on the shadow side confuse the form.



Right: Here the light and shadow areas are carefully planned as described on the preceding page.

Wrong: Patches of incorrect values give a dirty, irregular look to this face.

Right: The values are now organized. The light and shadow pattern is clear and distinct.

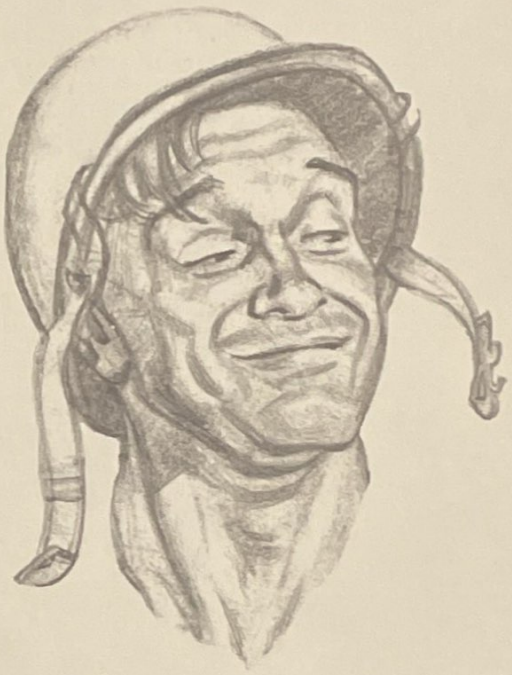
This head by Al Parker demonstrates how well the simple light and shade treatment works. There is a strong separation of tone between the front and side planes of the face. This side plane, the underplane of the jaw, and the shadow on the neck form one simple, effective shadow area.

Facial character and expression — ALBERT DORNE

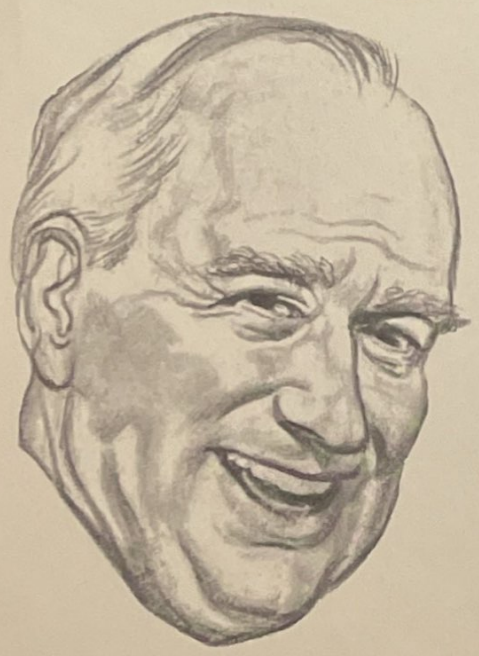
When you draw expression, the most important point to remember is that one part of the face almost never acts alone. There will usually be a related action in other facial muscles. For example, when the mouth laughs, the eyes must wrinkle.

Try it yourself in front of a mirror. Try to laugh with your mouth without letting the action affect your eyes — see how false your expression is. Now relax and laugh naturally — every feature, muscle, and plane in your face breaks into movement, from the top of your head to your chin and back to your ears. Walk away from the mirror and do it over again — you can actually feel your whole face breaking into movement. Try any violent emotional expression you can think of — terror, anger, rage, sneering, helplessness, joy — and you will notice that everything moves. Remember this when you draw expressions and it will serve you well.

Laughter . . . partly closes the eyes, elevates the corners of the open mouth as well as the outer parts of the eyebrows and nostrils. Smiles have the same characteristics to a lesser degree.



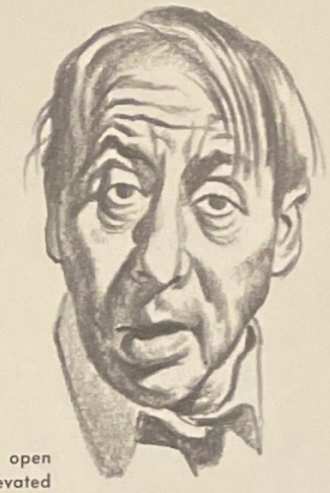
Sneering and disdain . . . are indicated by an upturned and averted face with the eyelids partly closed, with a twist of the mouth to one side or down.



Shame and shyness . . . have the same characteristics. A generally turned-down head, sometimes averted — also an averted glance. In shyness the lips often pout.

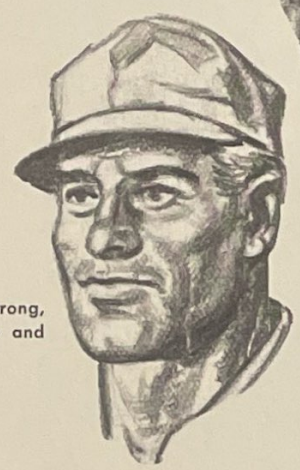
Fear . . . is expressed by dilated eyes and nostrils, open mouth and lowered head.

Terror and horror . . . produce dilated eyes and nostrils to a marked degree, an open mouth and lowered head — though it is sometimes thrown back.

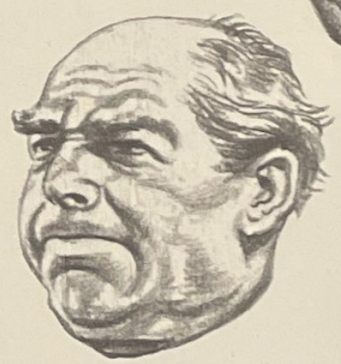


Helplessness . . . produces an open mouth, a wrinkled forehead and elevated eyebrows.

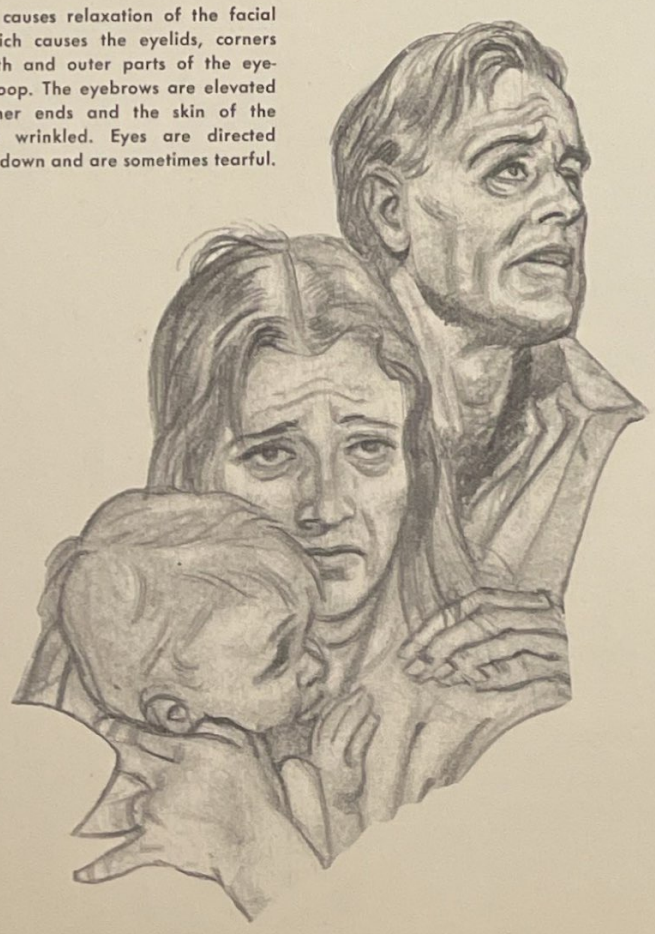
Determination . . . is shown by a strong, protruding chin, a concentrated gaze and a firm, set mouth.



Anger, rage, and indignation . . . are indicated by lowered brows, compressed lips, stiffly set jaws, and glaring eyes. In rage, the lips are sometimes drawn back, exposing the teeth.



Grief . . . causes relaxation of the facial muscles, which causes the eyelids, corners of the mouth and outer parts of the eyebrows to droop. The eyebrows are elevated at their inner ends and the skin of the forehead is wrinkled. Eyes are directed either up or down and are sometimes tearful.



Meditation or reflection . . . generally causes a slight frown and the eyes usually assume a vacant expression.

How the head changes — from infant to teen-ager

AT ONE YEAR: the head is large in proportion to the face and features, which seem enclosed by chubby, full cheeks. The chin and nose are quite small and the neck is short and fat. The eyebrows are very light. If we drew a line halfway between the top of the head and the chin, the eyes would be below it.

AT SIX YEARS: the face is growing larger in proportion to the skull, and the chin is becoming more pronounced. The mouth and the nose show a more definite shape at this age and the neck is growing larger. The eye is only slightly below the halfway line.

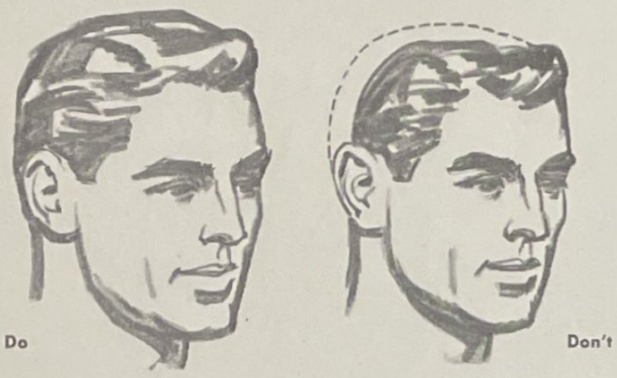
AT ELEVEN YEARS: a pronounced change has taken place. The face has lengthened, with the jaw and chin becoming quite definite. The nose has grown longer and the halfway line crosses the top of the eyes. The mouth is firmer. The neck grows longer and begins to develop.

AT SEVENTEEN: we have almost an adult head with adult proportions. The eyes, lips, nose and chin have developed practically to their full size and now begin to look mature. The jaw and cheekbones have become much more prominent, neck construction more pronounced. The eyes are on the halfway line.

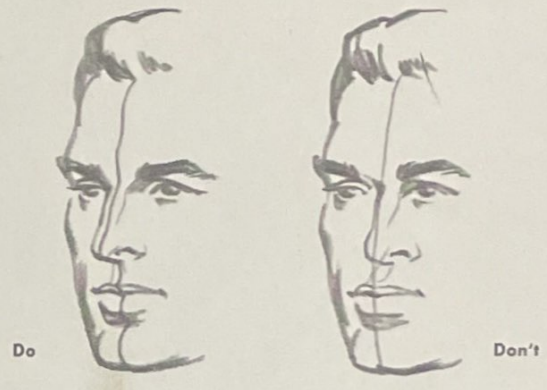
Do's and don'ts

Making your own mistakes is a part of learning, but you can also learn a lot from the mistakes that others have made. On this page we show you some common beginners' errors in constructing the head, placing the features on it, and using light and shade, as well as how to avoid or correct these errors. Review this page from time to time – it will help you keep from falling into bad drawing habits.

Start with the basic egg shape of the head and "draw through" the guide lines to locate its features and planes accurately. If you begin drawing details before doing this, the head may be flat and the features misplaced.

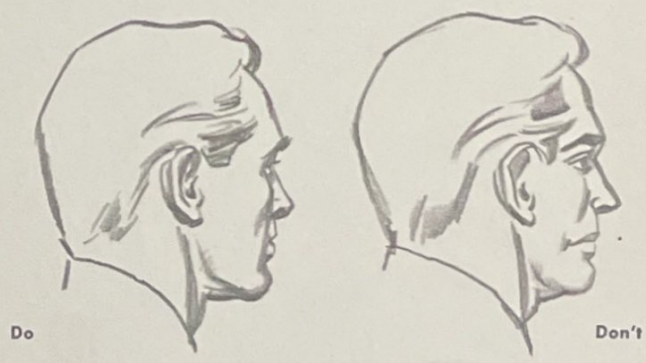


Allow enough room both above and behind the ears for the skull plus the hair. Check again the measurements shown on pages 4 and 5. Don't draw the face and features too large in proportion to the entire shape of the head.



The center line of the features should rise above the general plane of the face or sink below it, following the features. Don't locate the tip of the nose on a "flat" center line when the head is at an angle.

Make your guide lines curve as the head tilts. Don't use straight horizontal guide lines when showing the head at an angle — this will result in distorted proportions and incorrect placement of features, as in the "don't" drawing.



The features gradually disappear as the head turns away. Don't try to show too much of them in a three-quarter back view. In the "do" drawing, note the greater distance between the ear and eye. Study these proportions.

There are places where you should make the hairline and eyebrows blend softly into the flesh tones. Don't draw hard, sharp edges on the hair and eyebrows, particularly at the temples. This produces a "pasted-on" appearance.

Plan your light and dark areas carefully so that they emphasize the large forms of the head and features. Don't "chop up" the form of the head with confused, unrelated patches of tone. Look again at pages 18 and 19.

ALBERT
DORNE

The hand – its powers of expression

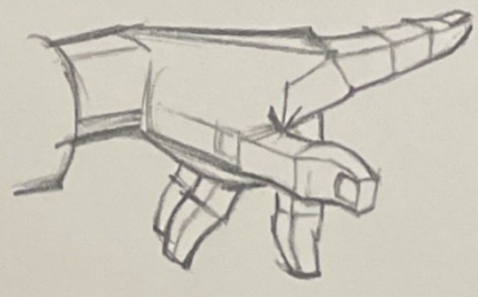
In its powers of expression, the hand is second only to the face. Its attitudes and gestures are an eloquent, natural language in themselves, known around the world and throughout the ages. Clenched in a fist, the hand threatens – it tells of determination or defiance. With the index finger thrust straight out, it points or accuses. Shake this finger up and down and the hand warns or admonishes.

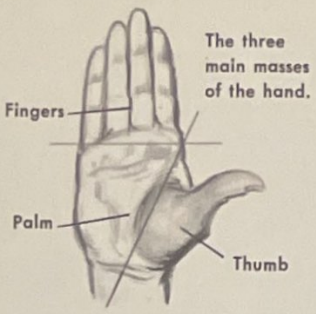
For the artist, face and hands go together. The best way to understand their relationship is to experience it. When you get angry, your brows lower, your eyes glare – and your hands instinctively ball into fists, with the fingernails biting into the palms. When you are very tired, your head sags – and your hands go lax and limp. Your hands instinctively play a part, either lesser or greater, in expressing every feeling you have. Always remember this when you draw the figure. Giving the hands the right gesture to suit the action can add significantly to the conviction and completeness of your picture.

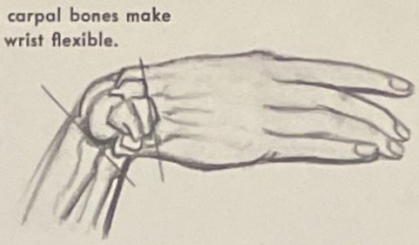
The hands go with the head in more than the expression of a gesture or an emotion. With the head, they are the only parts of the body generally exposed, and their physical appearance should be in keeping with the head. Suppose, for example, you want to draw a laborer. He has a weather-beaten face – and he should have strong, calloused hands to go with it. With the round face of a baby goes a certain kind of hands – chubby, dimpled ones. With the deeply wrinkled face of an old man go a pair of gnarled, bony hands. Make the hands consistent with the head in appearance as well as gesture and your picture will be the stronger for it.

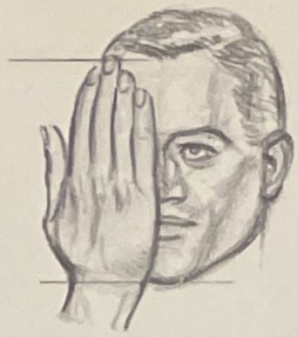
Hands, by themselves, can characterize people. You do not have to be a Sherlock Holmes to recognize a man who has spent a lifetime of toil in the out-of-doors by his big hands with their large knuckles and prominent veins. Hands, of course, are not always so telltale, but often we draw them as though they were, making them conform to an ideal standard. A beautiful woman does not have to have smooth, graceful, tapering fingers with long fingernails to be beautiful, but usually we will give them to her in an illustration. A hero in real life may have any kind of hands – but in a story illustration they will be strong and manly, as a rule, and so will his face.

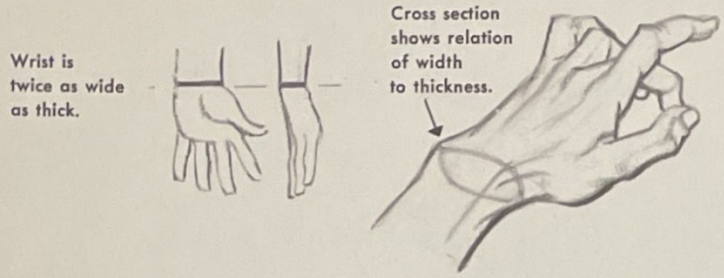
Practically every time you draw a figure the hands will play some part in the action. The way you draw them can emphasize the emotion or personality in a face and round out the character. Never be satisfied simply to draw a hand as something that completes an arm. Hands can talk. Make them tell your viewers everything they should know about the character, mood, and action of the people in your pictures.

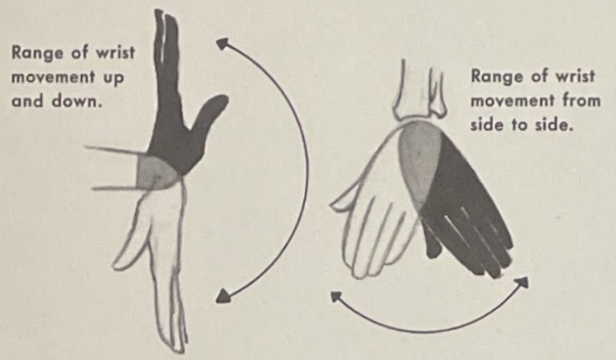


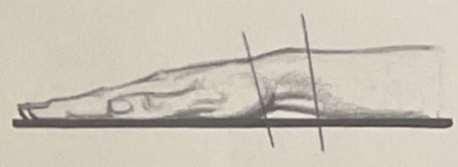





Be sure to draw the hand large enough. It is about the same length as the face from chin to hairline — a little more or less.






When hand and arm are placed flat on table, wrist slants down to hand. It does not touch table.

The hand and wrist — their construction and action

Hands should always be drawn large enough. Many students tend to make them too small in relation to the rest of the figure. However, if you give the study of hands the attention it deserves, drawing them the right size will seldom be a problem to you. Let us repeat again — the hands are next in importance to the face, so make them large enough. The diagram above shows the size of the hand in relation to the length of the face. Check this measurement for yourself, standing in front of a mirror.

To understand the action of the hand, study the movement of the wrist. As it transmits the action of the arm to the hand, the wrist enters into the large movements of the arm, giving it grace and power. The wrist can be called a universal joint, for it is capable of side-to-side and up-and-down movement as well as rotary movement. Study carefully the diagrams to the left and try these movements out on your own hand and wrist.

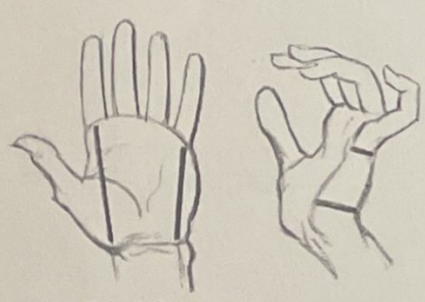
It is helpful to think of the hand as being composed of three masses — the palm, the thumb part, and the mass of the fingers.

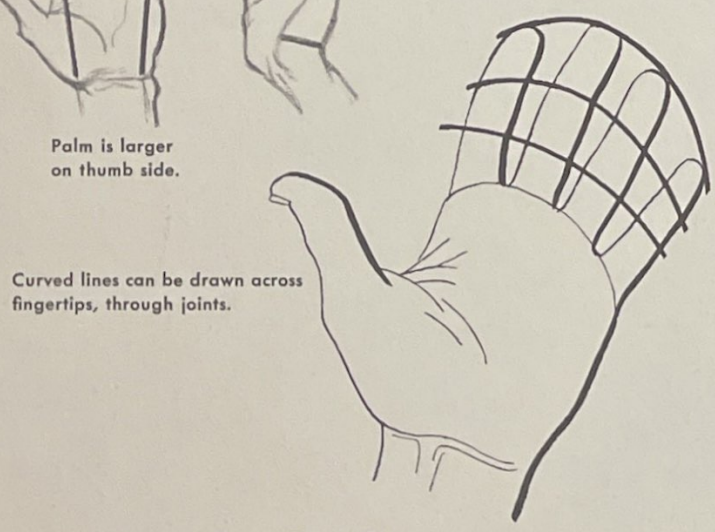
The palm has the form of a shallow bowl that is roughly rectangular in shape and well cushioned around the edges. A line across the wrist marks the lower limit of the palm. The upper limit is also definitely marked by lines across the base of the fingers. Measure the length of the palm and you will find it about an inch longer than the finger above that part of the palm. You will notice, too, that the palm is longer than the back of the hand. Except when the hand is clenched in a fist the back of the hand is quite flat.

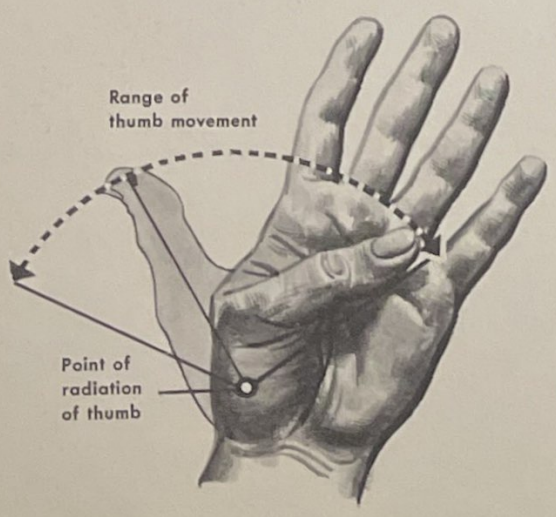
Most of the modeling in the palm of the hand is caused by a system of fleshy cushions and pads with which it is thickly upholstered. These cushions cover the bony framework of the palm. The same is true of the fingers on the palm side.

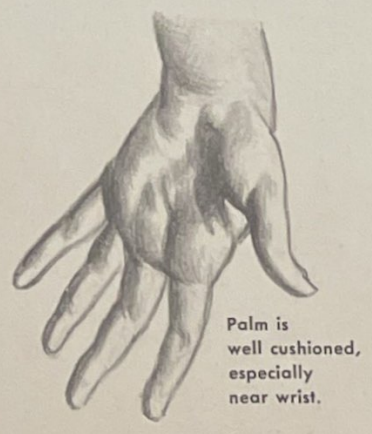
The thumb is the most active and powerful finger on the hand. It is set into the palm by the highly mobile "ball of the thumb," which gives it a great range of movement independent of the rest of the hand. The thumb moves in any direction.

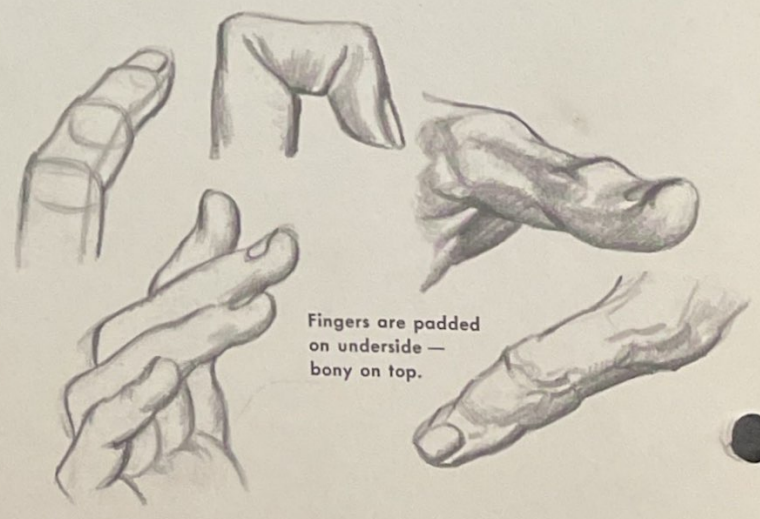
The fingers taper both singly and as a mass. The outer ones have a tendency to curve in slightly toward the middle finger.

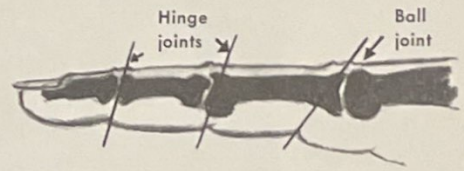












The thumb is heavier than the other fingers and it lacks their characteristic taper except in the end joint. Its middle joint is often rather "narrow waisted."

The top edge of the palm is curved where the fingers join it. When the hand and fingers are extended, similar curves are formed by the lines running across the joints of the fingers and by the tips of the fingers also.

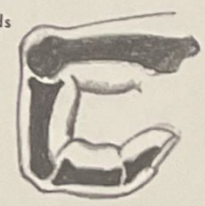
To understand the action of the hand and draw it correctly, you must have a knowledge of its internal structure – the bones that make up its framework and establish its proportions. Study carefully and memorize the information in the diagrams at the bottom of this page.

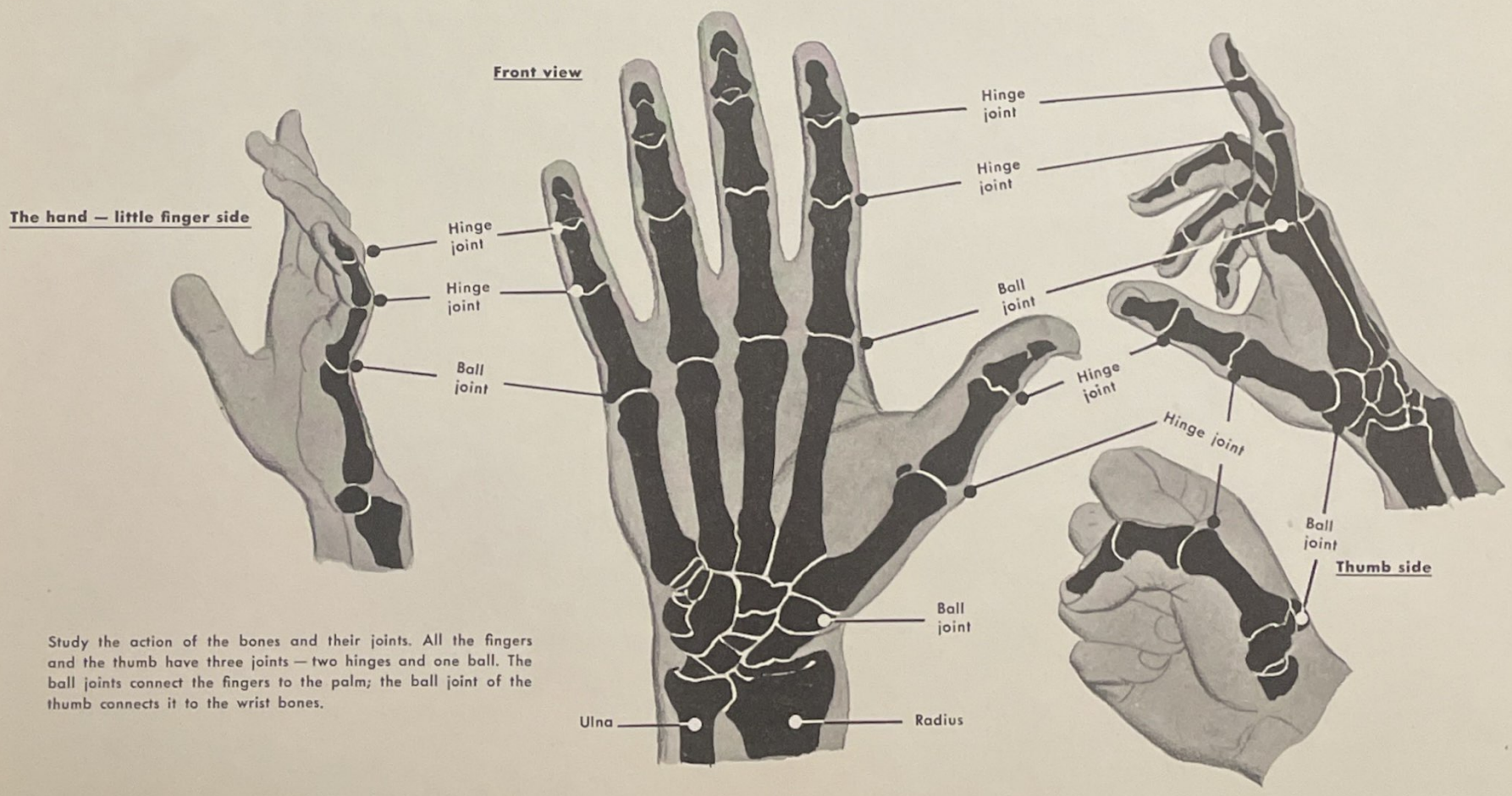
Note the difference between the "hinge joints" which move in one direction only – at right angles to the length of the fingers – and have no sideward movement, and the ball joints, which can rotate in different directions. Study your own hands and see how far each joint will move.

In learning to draw the hand it is helpful to think of the thumb, palm, and fingers as being made of cubelike forms. On the next two pages we will show how to use these forms in planning your drawings of hands. With this method it is easier to get the planes of the fingers down correctly and give a solid appearance to the entire hand. In the finished drawing you can round off the hard angles of the cubic construction.

You need never be at a loss for hands to study. Even when drawing, you have another hand to serve as a model at any time. If you place a mirror in front of yourself to reflect your free hand you will have an infinite variety of poses to choose from.

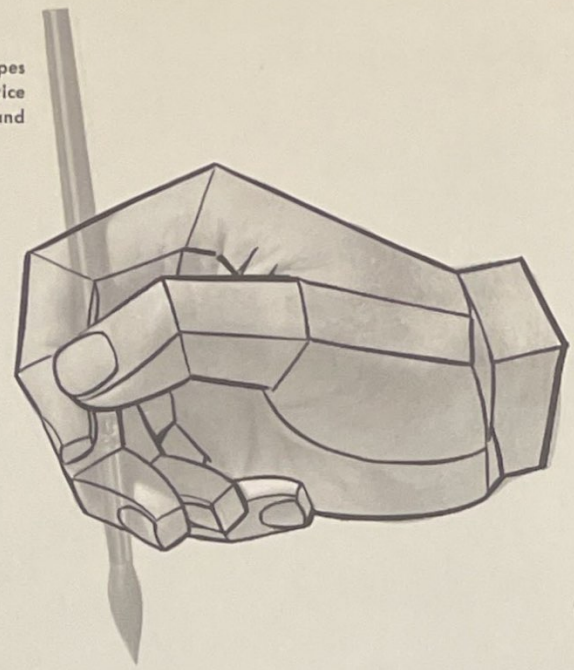
Draw from life every chance you get

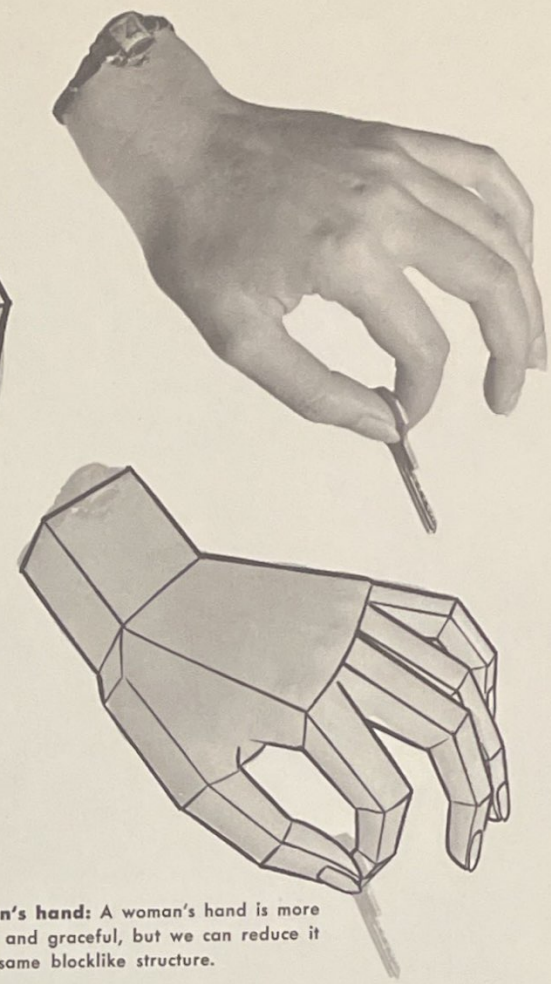




Study the action of the bones and their joints. All the fingers and the thumb have three joints — two hinges and one ball. The ball joints connect the fingers to the palm; the ball joint of the thumb connects it to the wrist bones.

Man's hand: The planes and blocklike shapes are easy to see on this man's hand. Notice that the finger joints work just like hinges and the hand "hinges" at the wrist.



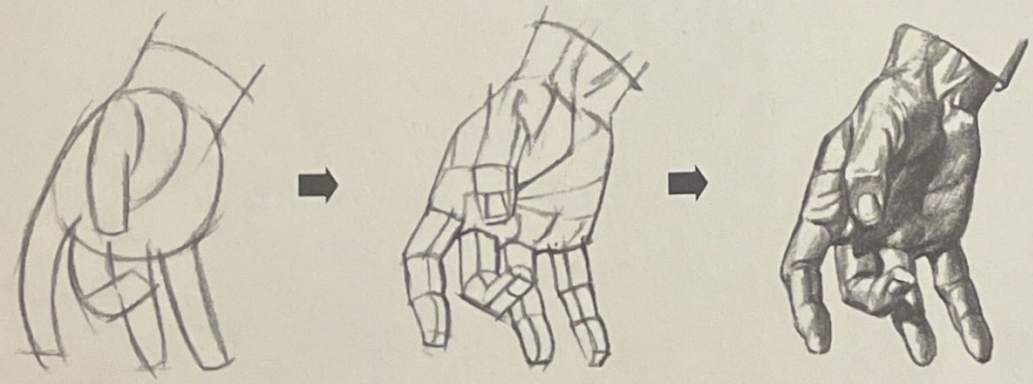


Woman's hand: A woman's hand is more slender and graceful, but we can reduce it to the same blocklike structure.

Blocking in the hand

On the last two pages we studied the structure and movement of the hand and fingers. Now we will get down to the actual business of drawing the hand. When we learned to draw the figure, we started with the basic forms, and we will again use simple forms to draw the hand. At the top of this page there are photographs of two hands on which we have diagrammed blocklike forms with their top, side, and bottom planes. Study them carefully and, from now on, think of the hand and fingers this way as you sketch them in. As you gain experience you may omit these cube forms from your preliminary sketches, but you should continue to think of them as you work.

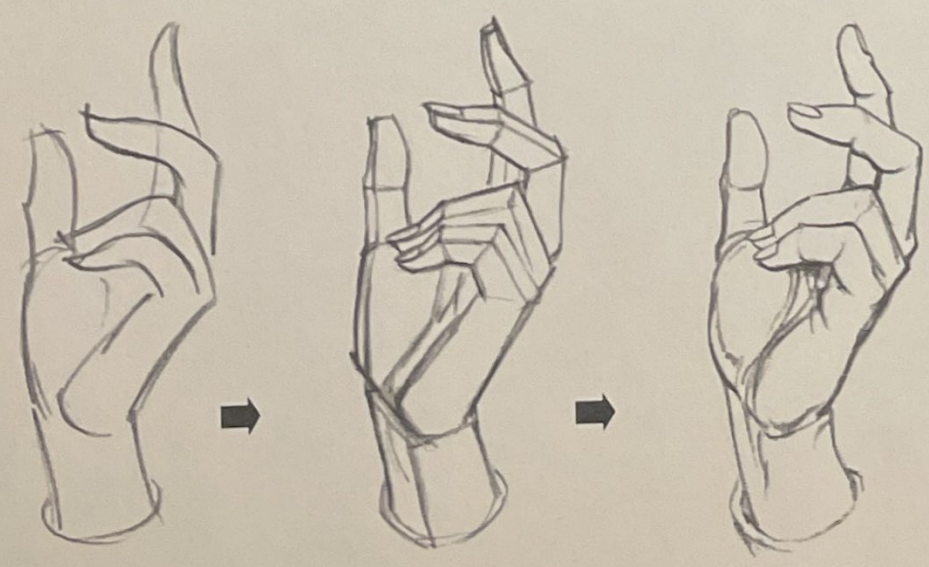
The drawings on the lower half of the page show how you first establish the general size and action of the hand – then how to solve construction problems with the cube forms – and, finally, how to soften the edges and add realistic detail. As you work, think of the rhythmic flow of action through the wrist, palm, and fingers, and of the solid structure that makes the hand look convincing, and try to show both in your drawing.

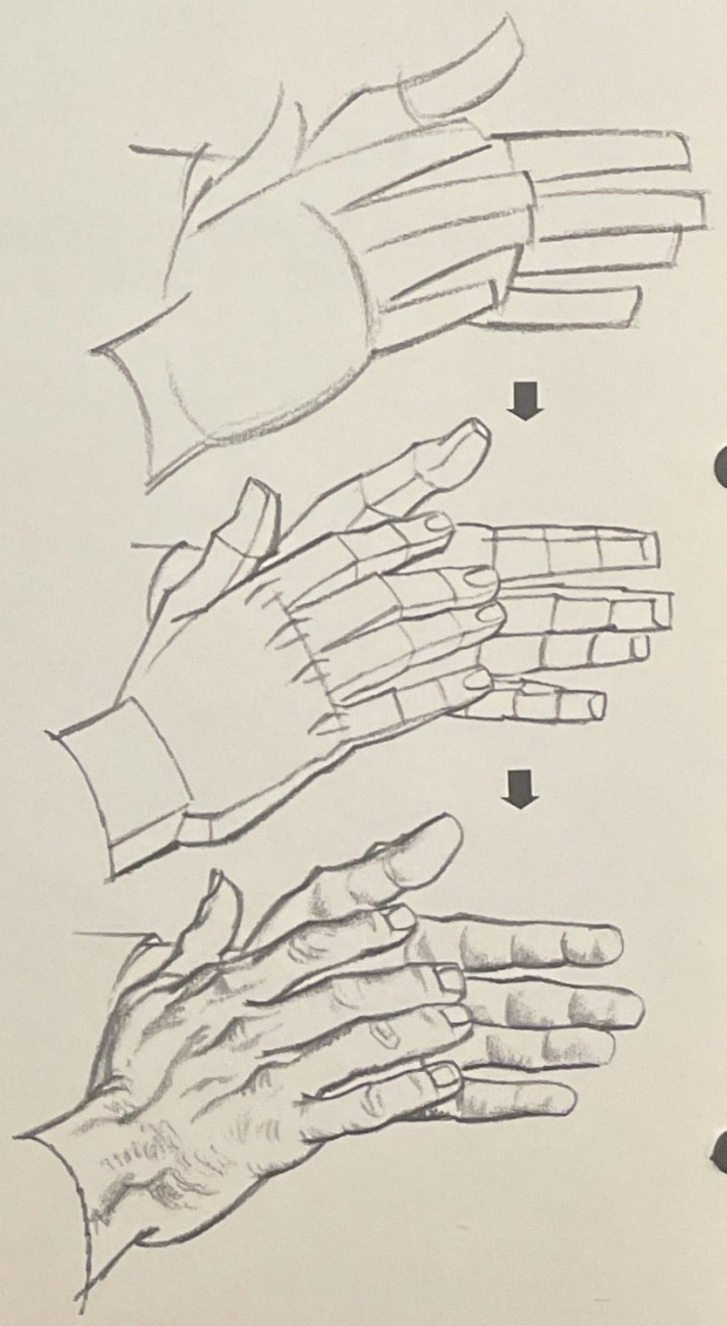


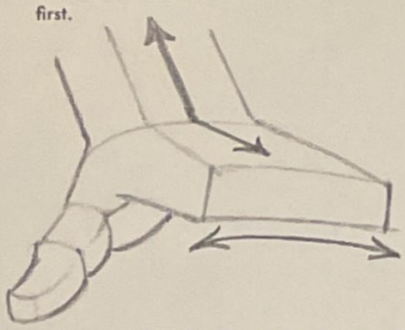
1 Placement and action: First sketch in the rough shape and flow of action of the hand and fingers. Sketch very lightly so that you can easily erase these first lines later.

2 Blocklike construction: Directly over your first lines, block in the cubelike forms of hand and fingers. Keep in mind both the solidity of the forms and their relative size.

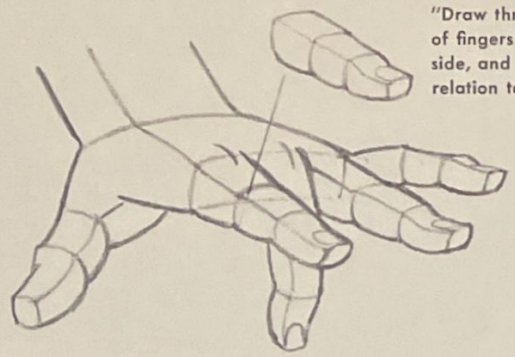
3 Realistic hand: Now add details and texture. Model with form-revealing light and shade if you wish, but be sure not to lose the large forms which make the solid hand.





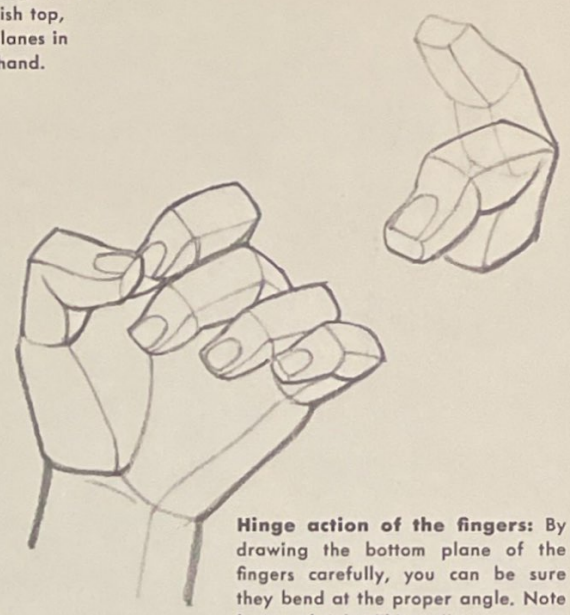


Block in the palm, thumb, and wrist first.



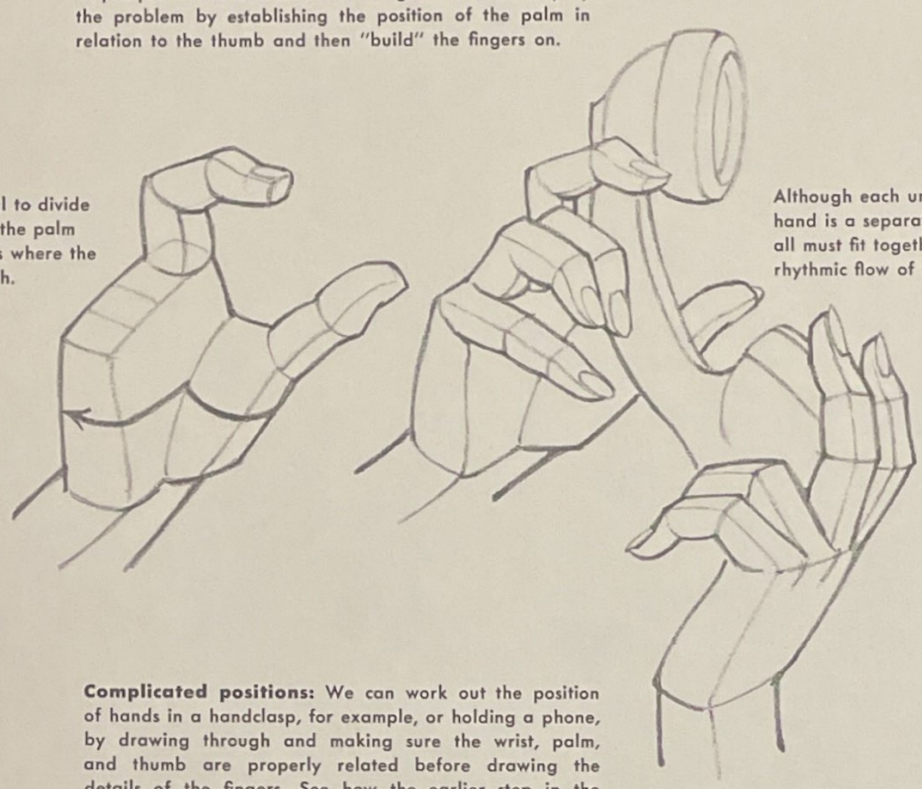
"Draw through" block forms of fingers to establish top, side, and bottom planes in relation to rest of hand.

Foreshortening: The block method of construction is particularly useful in working out foreshortened views of the hand because it is easier to imagine what happens in perspective to a cube than a finger. Here we simplify the problem by establishing the position of the palm in relation to the thumb and then "build" the fingers on.

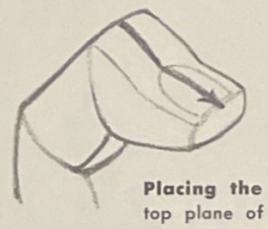


Hinge action of the fingers: By drawing the bottom plane of the fingers carefully, you can be sure they bend at the proper angle. Note how each joint "hinges" on next one — they do not rotate or twist.

It is often helpful to divide the top edge of the palm into four sections where the fingers will attach.

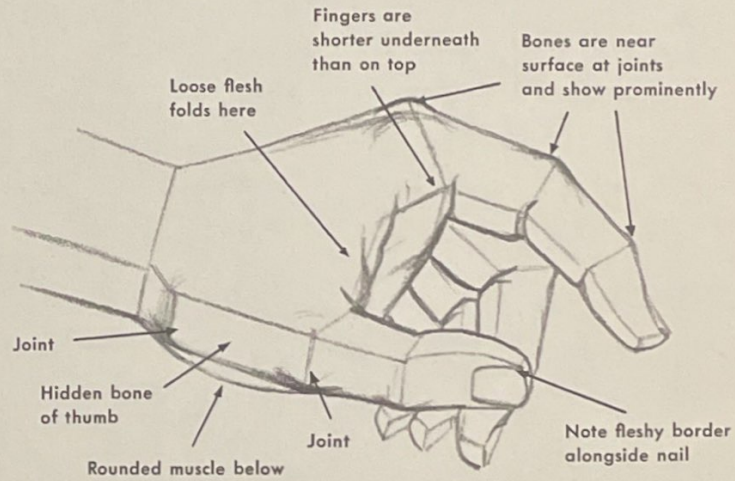


Although each unit of the hand is a separate form, all must fit together with a rhythmic flow of action.

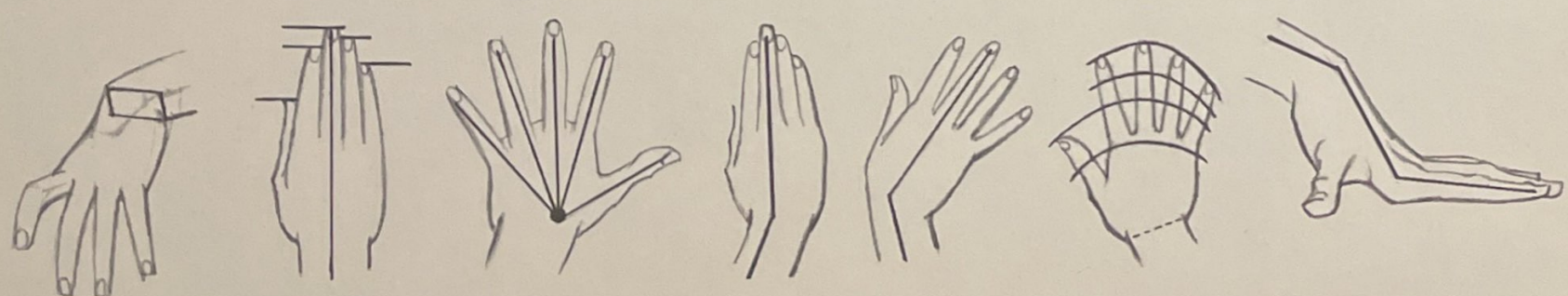


Placing the nail: The nail fits into the top plane of the finger and rises slightly toward the tip. Note how the top plane slants downward from the knuckle to the nail.

Complicated positions: We can work out the position of hands in a handclasp, for example, or holding a phone, by drawing through and making sure the wrist, palm, and thumb are properly related before drawing the details of the fingers. See how the earlier step in the phone-holding drawing helps assure a true-to-life result.


Fingers are shorter underneath than on top
Bones are near surface at joints and show prominently
Loose flesh folds here
Joint
Hidden bone of thumb
Joint
Rounded muscle below
Note fleshy border alongside nail

"Humanizing" the block forms: Our purpose in drawing the hand is, of course, to make a convincing picture. The block forms serve merely to help us achieve this result. Here are some things to remember when translating these forms into a lifelike hand.



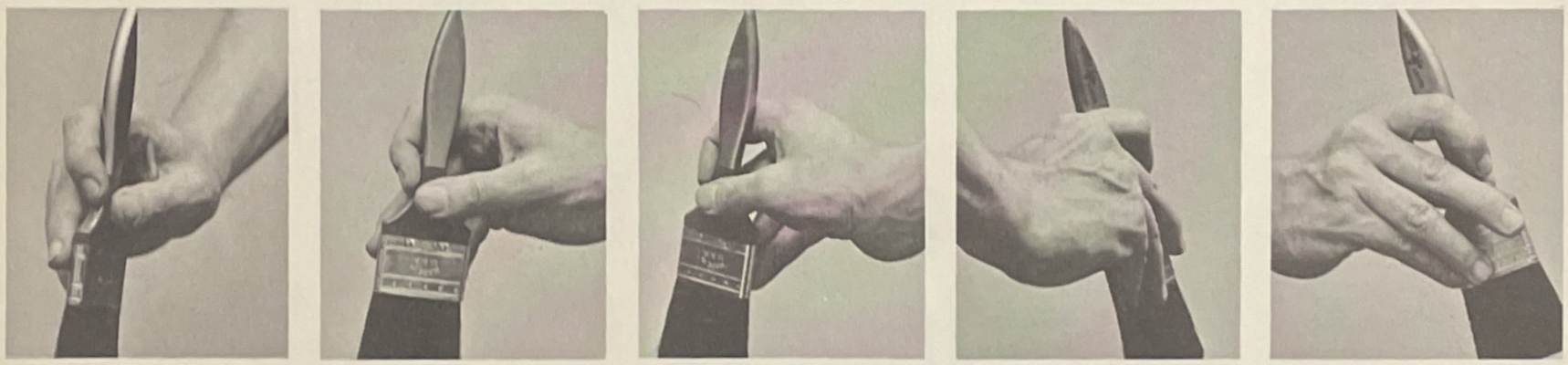
Important points in the action, proportion, and movement of the hand, wrist, and fingers.

Observing the hand from different viewpoints

In each strip of photographs below we show a hand engaged in a single action viewed from five different positions as we circle around it. Study these pictures carefully to understand better the total three-dimensional structure of the hands and fingers. You will observe – and this is very important – that various parts of the hand and fingers disappear completely from sight with a slight shift in viewpoint. Remember that what you don't show is just as important as what you do show.

Note that not only the fingers but also the body of the hand "wraps around" the solid spherical form of the ball.

This action is similar to the one above, but more relaxed. The transparent glass enables you to study the form and action of the palm and underside of the fingers.

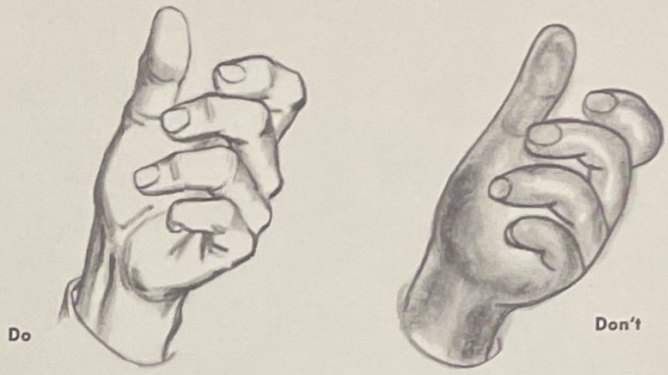


This shows how the hand and fingers adjust to the shape of the object they hold. Notice how the thumb works in opposition to the fingers.

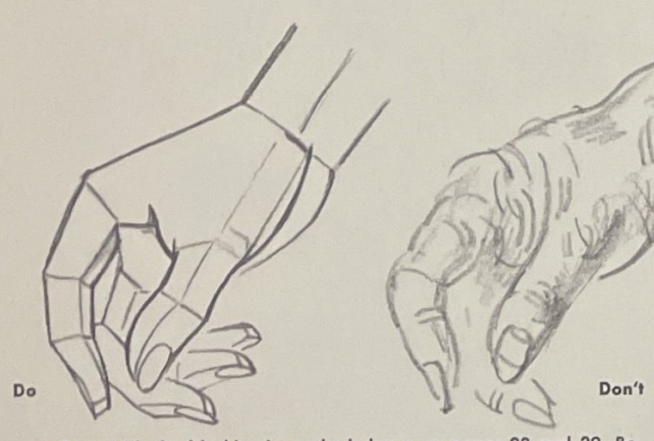
In this gripping action, see how the fingers and knuckles fit together and the back of the hand curves.

Do's and don'ts

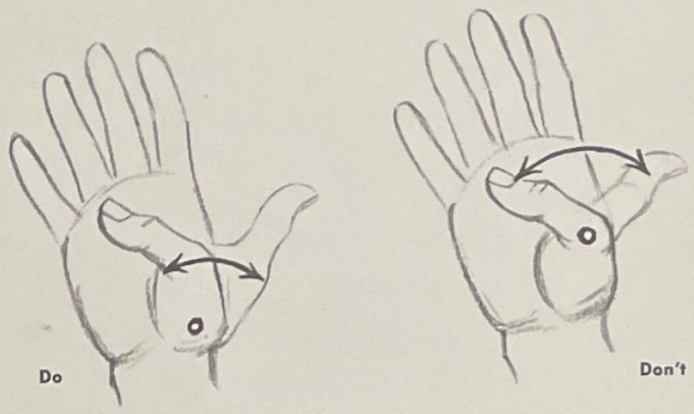
Hands are so active and so versatile that they are often considered one of the most difficult parts of the body to draw. Even artists with long experience may not always get them right at their first try. Here, however, are some basic hints that will help you learn to draw them correctly. In each case the proper approach lies in following one or more of the principles we have explained in this lesson.



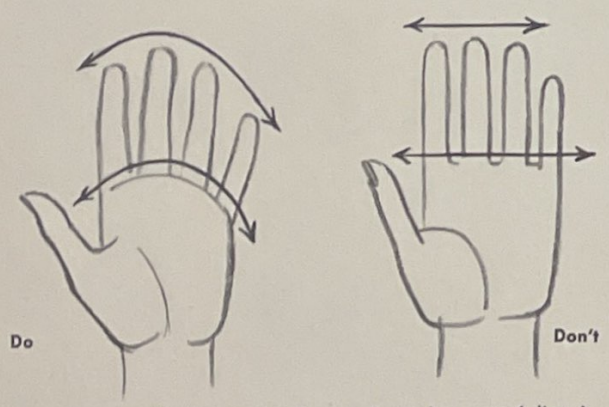
Keep in mind the bone and muscle structure beneath the surface. In some places the surface is influenced by the angular bones, in others by the soft muscles. Don't round off all the forms of the hand or it will look rubbery.



Start with the blocking-in method shown on pages 28 and 29. Be sure the various parts of the hand fit together before putting in surface details. No amount of detail will save a poorly constructed hand — but the cubes can prevent one.

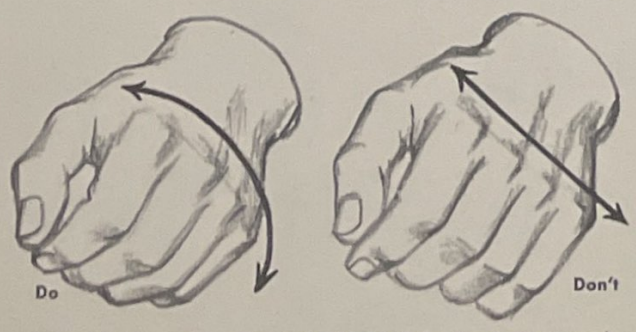


Remember that the thumb is attached at the wrist and swings independently of the rest of the hand. Don't limit the action of the thumb by swinging it only from the middle joint, but make it work in a natural, lifelike way.

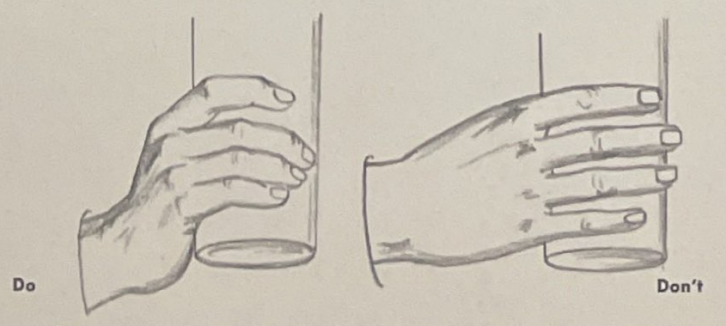


The fingertips form a curved line, and another curved line is formed where the fingers join the palm. Make sure these lines really look curved — not straight — in your drawing. The arch of the curve is highest at the middle finger.

When the hand is closed, the fingers should point slightly toward the center of the palm. Don't fold the little finger straight down the side of the palm or it will look stiff and unnatural. Its tip should be well in from the side.



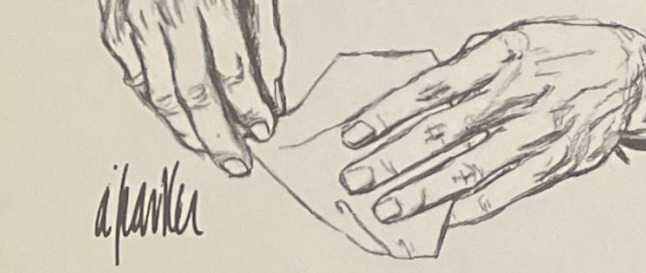
When the fingers are closed the back of the hand curves, and this curve is most noticeable along the line of the knuckles. Don't flatten them out.

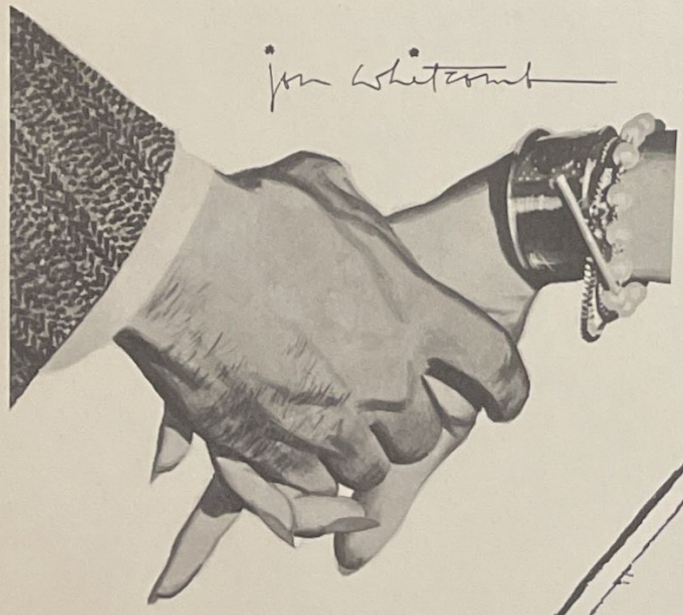


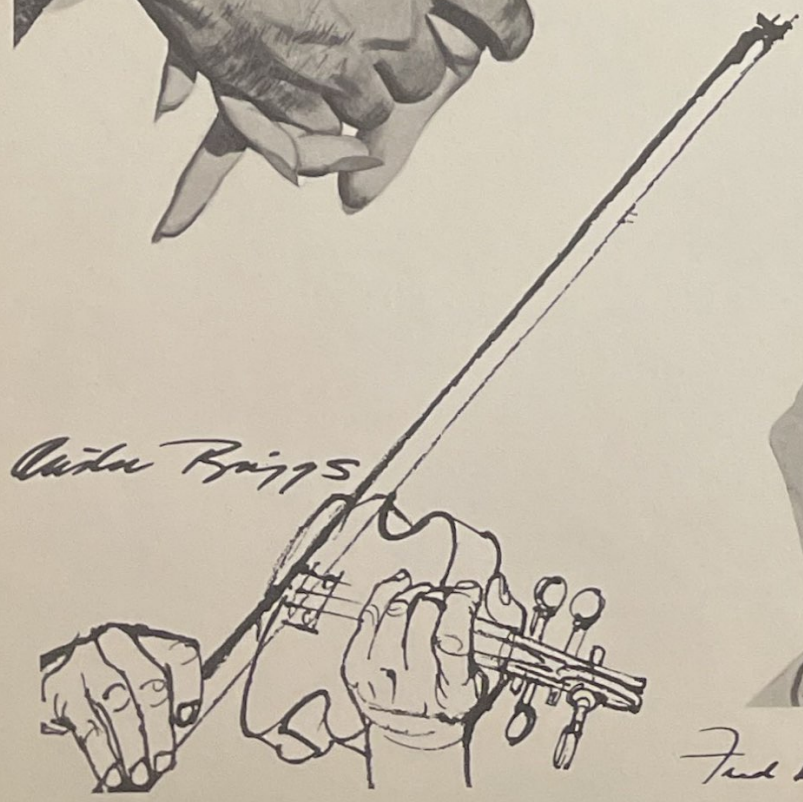
The wrist is quite flexible, and the fingers, thumb, and palm adapt themselves flexibly to whatever the action may be. Don't make hands look stiff.

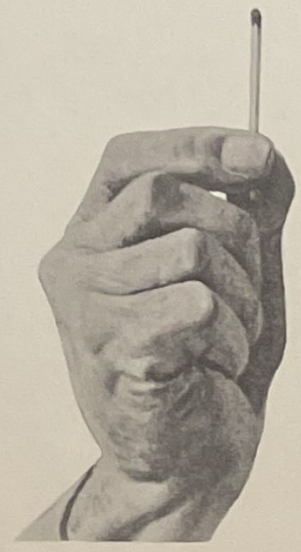
Hands tell the story

These illustrations drawn and painted by various members of your Faculty show how effectively the hands can be used to tell a story. As we have said, the hands are second in importance only to the face when it comes to expressing personality and emotion. Examine the hands in a picture closely and you will see that not only do they reveal the sex of a person and whether he is old or young, but they may even suggest his physical type and occupation and how he feels about what is happening in the scene. Hands also reflect the personality and intent of the artist who drew them. For instance, we see Norman Rockwell's serious, penetrating insight into people in the hands that he draws. In the hands by Jon Whitcomb we find the smartness and decorative quality that are so much a part of the glamour he depicts.

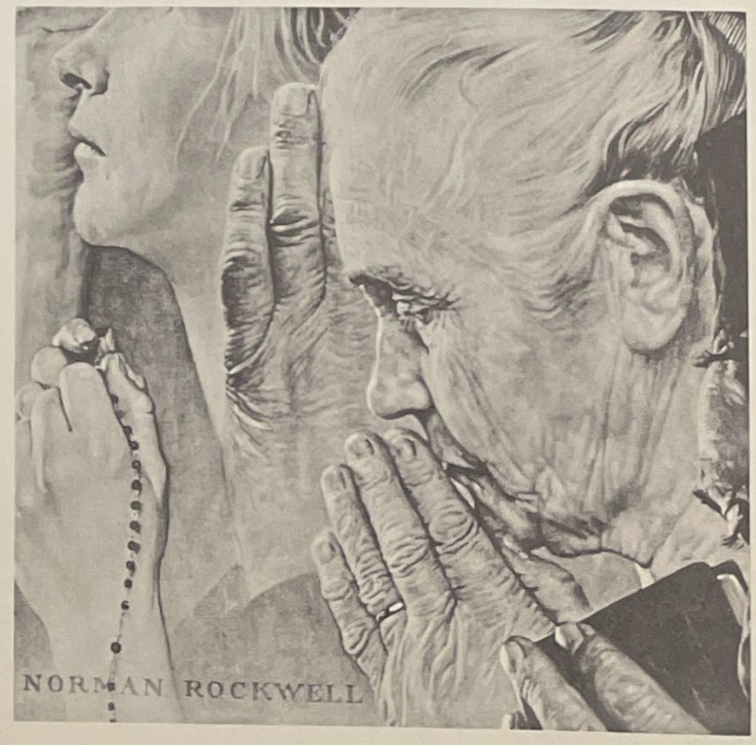








© The Curtis Publishing Co.



FAMOUS ARTISTS COURSE
Student work
Lesson 6
Constructing the head and hands

HOW TO PRACTICE AND PREPARE FOR THIS LESSON

In this lesson we show you how to draw the most expressive parts of the body -- the head and hands. The main thing to observe in your study and practice is that the head and its features as well as the hands are always drawn as solid, three-dimensional forms. Follow these practice suggestions before you begin to work on the assignments you send in for criticism:

1. Using the step-by-step procedure shown on pages 4 and 5 and 8 and 9, make many drawings of the head. Use yourself as a model (with the aid of a mirror) or ask friends to pose for you.

2. Clip some good clear photos of heads from magazines. Study these carefully. Then lay tracing or visualizing paper over the photos and construct the heads with pencil line following the method demonstrated on pages 4 and 5. Be sure to construct the heads as solid forms. Note how all the heads conform generally to the construction and measurements described in the lesson, despite individual variations.

3. Draw the head in various positions, applying what you learned from pages 6 and 7. Keep some of your drawings quite simple to practice the blocking-in method of the entire head. Others should be more detailed drawings of the head and its individual features. Study these features on pages 12 through 16 and make separate drawings of the eyes, ears, nose and mouth.

4. With a friend as a model, set up a lamp with a good bright bulb and move it around the model, noticing how the pattern of light changes on the head. Draw the head with the light source in different positions and concentrate on separating the planes of light and shadow. As you work, use pages 18 and 19 as a guide.

5. Sketch, from life or photos, the heads of children of various ages. Notice the differences in construction and proportion as pointed out on page 22.

6. Using a soft pencil, draw construction lines directly on your own hand just like those at the top of page 28. Study what happens to the forms when you move your hand and fingers in different positions.

7. Using the hands of a friend as a model, or your own hands and a mirror, practice blocking in the forms as shown on pages 28 and 29. As you draw, check the construction and action by referring to pages 26 and 27.

THE ASSIGNMENTS YOU ARE TO SEND IN FOR CRITICISM

ASSIGNMENT 1. Make two finished pencil drawings of a hand in the positions described below:

(a) GRIPPING THE HANDLE OF A HAMMER. Don't show the entire hammer, just a portion of the handle. Include the wrist.

(b) HANGING RELAXED. In this view the wrist is relaxed and the hand is hanging down over the edge of a table or arm of a chair. Show only the hand and wrist.

In each of these drawings, choose interesting and descriptive views that show enough of the fingers to explain the action. If you work from your own hand in a mirror, turn the mirror at an angle that gives you an interesting view. Draw these hands on visualizing or tracing paper, using the blocking-in method described on page 28. Make each drawing about 4 inches in its longest dimension.

When you have finished the drawings, cut the sheets down to about 6 x 8 inches and mount them on a sheet of 11 x 14-inch drawing paper with Scotch tape or masking tape.

Mark this sheet -- ASSIGNMENT 1.

ASSIGNMENT 2. With the aid of a mirror, make a solid, well-constructed pencil drawing of your own head. Don't draw a direct front or profile view. Turn your head slightly to one side. Draw enough of the neck to show its relationship to the head. The head should be approximately 4 inches high on an 11 x 14-inch sheet of paper.

Arrange the lighting to bring out the form as clearly as possible. If you wear glasses, construct the basic form of the head, the planes of the face, and the eyes in their

(over, please)

sockets before you add the glasses. Pose without a hat.

Try for a good likeness, but, above all, draw a solid, well-constructed head.

Mark this drawing -- ASSIGNMENT 2.

ASSIGNMENT 3. From your scrap file, choose a good, clear photograph of a head of a member of the opposite sex. Select a three-quarter view with strong, simple lighting -- avoid confusing lights and shadows. The head should be about 3 to 5 inches high, so the construction of the features can be clearly seen.

Using this photograph for basic information, make a finished rendering in wash or opaque on an 11 x 14-inch piece of illustration board. The head in your drawing should be about 4 inches high. Construct the head in the way shown in the lesson. You may construct your drawing on tracing or visualizing paper and then trace it on illustration board. This will give you a cleaner surface to work on, as you will not need to erase your construction lines.

Mark this wash or opaque drawing and the photograph you worked from -- ASSIGNMENT 3, and send them in together.

In criticizing your work for these assignments, your instructor will want to see that you have drawn heads and hands which are solidly constructed and properly proportioned.

Check
before mailing

IMPORTANT: Be sure to letter your name, address, and student number neatly at the lower left-hand corner of each assignment. In the lower right corner, place the lesson number and assignment number.

Your lesson carton should contain:

Assignment 1
Assignment 2
Assignment 3
Reference photo for Assignment 3
1 Return shipping label filled out completely

Mail this carton to:
FAMOUS ARTISTS COURSE, WESTPORT, CONN.